

Corporation Counsel Knight was unmoved, as shown in his reply.

"Indianapolis, Ind.,  
February 6, 1940.

"Mr. Arnold Petersen,  
61 Cliff Street,  
New York, N.Y.

"Dear Sir:

"I thank you for your detailed expression of your views in your letter of February 2, 1940.

"I have no personal interest whatever in any controversy on this subject, as my official position with the city calls upon me only to exercise my judgment when called upon by some official or department of the city for an opinion. I merely answered your first letter as a courtesy, and I in no way challenge your right to views contrary to mine.

"If yours views are right, the courts will doubtless sustain them, but of this the courts must be the final judge.

"Very truly yours,  
(Signed) "Edw. H. Knight,  
"Corporation Counsel."

This final letter was sent by the National Secretary:

"February 7, 1940.

"Edw. H. Knight,  
Corporation Counsel,  
City of Indianapolis, etc.

"Re: Interference by police with rights of political party to sell literature in streets of municipalities.

"Sir:

"I have received your letter of February 6 and note with considerable surprise the nature of your reply. I had not assumed that there were any personal considerations involved in the question under discus-

sion. I did assume that when City Attorney Reddington suggested that I write him further on the matter, and that your answering my reasoned and documented letter to Mr. Reddington—this all implied a concession on the part of the City of Indianapolis that it might possibly be in the wrong, and that it, no more than the Socialist Labor Party, desired any unnecessary litigation over a question which, on the basis of the several Supreme Court decisions, seemed to leave no doubt as to it having already been resolved in our favor.

"While I appreciate your personal courtesy in this matter, I am constrained to observe that the attitude of the City of Indianapolis is one of arrogance and unreason. However, if your final decision is that the United States Supreme Court rulings must be submitted to the tests of the lower courts, we have apparently no choice in the matter.

"In my letters I believe I have shown that reason and logic are entirely on our side. If it is conceivable that the law can be in such violent conflict with reason and logic as to be sustained against us, it would seem that once more Dickens's Mr. Bumble was right when he likened the law to a certain domestic quadruped.

"I repeat here, however, that if any of our members are arrested for exercising their constitutional rights, especially as reaffirmed in recent Supreme Court decisions, we shall be compelled to sue those responsible for making false arrest.

"You will hear further from us in due season concerning the question at issue, in one way or another.

"Please note that copies of this

letter are being sent to the Mayor and City Attorney of Indianapolis, as was done also with the previous letter written you.

"Respectfully yours,  
"Socialist Labor Party,  
(Signed) "Arnold Petersen,  
"National Secretary."

We are now preparing to contest the ruling of the City of Indianapolis, and we shall probably have to take the matter into court this summer, unless we elect to await the outcome of the Atlantic City case.

There will be appended in the published proceedings for the record a brief summary of interferences with our civil rights.\*

At present the outstanding offender against civil liberties appears to be the notorious Dies Committee, whose chairman seems to have studied Hitler's methods closely, and certainly has given a good imitation of them in this country, in point of official lawlessness. The recent raid on the Communist party Philadelphia office by agents of the Dies Committee is a case in point. In complete disregard of due processes of law, thereby violating one of the most vital principles of genuine Americanism, this committee on uncovering un-American activities staged its unlawful raid on April 2,

\*For a number reasons it was found impossible to prepare the summary referred to. The subject, however, in its general aspect, and with particular reference to our experience during the summer and fall of 1940, was discussed again in the Report of the National Secretary to the National Executive Committee in Session, May, 1941. That part of the National Secretary's report dealing with this matter has been included in this record and may be found at the end of this volume.

1940, and, according to the newspapers, "confiscated two truckloads of documents." The news report goes on to say that "The raiders, operating in secret, descended on two offices and confiscated the documents. The papers were loaded on the two trucks and immediately started on the journey to Washington..... Among documents seized, police said, was a list of members of the Communist party in eastern Pennsylvania, motion picture film and what was described as 'propaganda literature.'"

Mussolini, Hitler and the other totalitarian bandits could hardly have improved on this performance. Raider Dies expressed pained surprise when he was told that his high-handed act would be challenged in court. The Constitution? Why, of course—wasn't he standing on it? Sure enough, as James Russell Lowell would say, wasn't he trampling it under his hoofs?

It is hoped that this convention will express itself strongly and emphatically on this and other outrages committed against the rights of the people to remain secure against search and seizure except as provided by law, on the interferences with free speech, etc., etc.

While interferences with open air meetings are frequent enough, it is seldom that local authorities dare go so far as to prohibit indoor meetings, especially since the Supreme Court gave Mayor Frank (Hitler) Hague of Jersey City such a sound drubbing. We all recall that Frank ("I am the law") Hague discovered that he wasn't such good law after all. Yet, in one of the semi-feudal Pennsylvania steel towns, West Homestead, the authorities have actually



dared to forbid indoor meetings! This gross usurpation will be challenged by the Socialist Labor Party if no one else meanwhile does so. The incident is of recent occurrence and is being investigated by the State and National Offices.

The question may be asked: Does not the S.L.P. seek the aid of the American Civil Liberties Union? The answer is: We do, but so far with precious little to note as a result of our effort to enlist the aid of the A.C.L.U. As pointed out in the 1939 report to the N.E.C.: "The American Civil Liberties Union has nobly declared that they will defend any case, however unpopular one way or the other, if it involves violation of constitutional and civil rights. Apparently there is one exception, namely, the S.L.P. We will defend, says the A.C.L.U., in effect, plutocrats and reformers, communist hoodlums and Nazi bandits—aye, even the Ford Company against that darling of the Lewis-Browder-Brown coalition, the National Labor Relations Board! All these we will defend says, in effect, the American Civil Liberties Union, but defend a case involving the S.L.P.—heaven forbid!" In the same report there was reprinted a letter which the National Secretary had written to the chairman of the A.C.L.U., Mr. Roger Baldwin, and for the record it might be noted that Mr. Baldwin never answered the National Secretary's letter. Referring specifically to an assault on some of our members in Philadelphia by the Stalinist gangsters in Philadelphia (now themselves receiving a dose of their own medicine by Raider Dies!), Mr. Baldwin was asked: "If they [S.L.P. members] are molested (as in the

case of the communist hoodlums in Philadelphia) will your organization assist us in bringing the gangsters to book—including those who may act as tools of some of those [communists] listed on your letterhead as members of your National Committee?"

As stated, Mr. Baldwin gave no answer to this or the other wholly relevant questions he was asked, but it is of interest to note that since then the A.C.L.U. has removed from its governing board the ignorant and ranting Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (who in the early days of the I.W.W. was sometimes called the Joan of Arc of the labor movement!). Gurley Flynn is today what she has always been, and it was not because she was suddenly found out that she was kicked off the A.C.L.U. committee, but because her master, St. Joe Stalin, bedded down with the ex-house painter, and proved those impediments (to the A.C.L.U.) which Shakespeare said he would not admit "to the marriage of true minds"! But why these "impediments" did not trouble the now respectable A.C.L.U. before is not at all clear.

However, as stated, despite repeated attempts, the A.C.L.U. record of non-cooperation with the S.L.P. is practically unbroken. Two cases in recent times stand out conspicuously in this respect, the Janesville, Wis., free speech case, and the assault on Comrade Leo Gabow in Portland, Ore., by a military gangster.

The detailed records in these two cases follow here:

#### *I—Janesville, Wis., Case.*

December 30, 1937: Supplied New York office A.C.L.U. with facts in

Janesville case, requesting their cooperation, etc.

January 8, 1938: Routine acknowledgment by A.C.L.U. received; matter will be taken up and will let us know about decision.

January 15, 1938: Further correspondence sent to New York office A.C.L.U. (copies of letters to governor of Wisconsin, editor Janesville *Daily Gazette*).

January 19, 1938: To A.C.L.U. additional copies of correspondence to Wisconsin governor, and requesting unequivocal reply as to whether we may expect their assistance.

January 22, 1938: A.C.L.U. acknowledgment, stating that "we have asked our Wisconsin state chairman to investigate...."

January 27, 1938: Letter from New York office A.C.L.U. received, which winds up by saying that we should give them an opportunity for acquainting themselves with all the facts before they adopt a course of action! (A whole month had passed.)

(No meetings were contemplated at this time in Janesville, so the matter was dropped.)

April 7, 1938: Sent New York office A.C.L.U. copies of correspondence with Robert M. La Follette, Washington, D.C. (Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor), re failure of Governor Phillip La Follette to maintain constitutional rights in Wisconsin.

April 9, 1938: From Britchey, New York office, commenting on La Follette's "evasive answer."

April 29, 1938: (On receipt of letter from Jerome Britchey, staff counsel New York office A.C.L.U., asking if we plan to hold meetings in certain cities, and if we "contemplate any difficulty there. If so we

wish to make some arrangement.") Letter to Britchey informing A.C.L.U. of open air meeting planned in Janesville for May 16, requesting them to stand by if need for legal assistance is required.

May 14, 1938: Letter from Britchey saying that he has been informed by Wisconsin Committee that "no trouble is expected in Janesville when (y)our representatives come down to speak"; and advice re attorney with whom our representative should confer re "permit."

May 16, 1938, 5.25 p.m.: Mr. Britchey phoned to give us the name and address of attorney in Madison, Wis., who should be called on for assistance.

May 18, 1938: To Britchey advising that above information was received too late to be of any use to us for the meeting which was scheduled to take place within a few hours of his telephone call. Also informing A.C.L.U. that meeting was held without any disturbance.

The details of the Janesville incident were related in the WEEKLY PEOPLE of April 23, 1938, under the heading "'Forward' Wisconsin—Violator of Free Speech."

#### *II—Gabow Case.*

December 31, 1937: Leo Gabow, national organizer in Portland, Ore., was physically assaulted by a United States Marine Sergeant at a public meeting which he was addressing.

January 1938: Gabow requested assistance in bringing suit against the sergeant from Portland representative of the A.C.L.U.

March 1938: Nothing done by Portland representative, although



promises had been given to Gabow on repeated visits that suit would be started.

March 9, 1938: From National Secretary, S.L.P., to New York office A.C.L.U. giving a full history of the case, and requesting definitely whether or not the A.C.L.U. would assist the S.L.P. in this case.

March 14, 1938: Letter from Britchey received in which he stated: "In answer to your question as to whether or not we will assist the Socialist Labor Party in this case, our unequivocal answer is yes."

March 17, 1938: To Britchey, New York City, quoting from Gabow's letter on failure of Portland representative to carry out promises to take action.

April 1, 1938: To Britchey on his failure to reply to letter of March 17, advising him that Mr. Gabow must leave Portland on April 10, calling attention to the absolute necessity for immediate action.

[Also reminding Britchey that they had taken absolutely no action in the Janesville case, which had been referred to them in December.]

Demanding a frank answer as to whether or not they will assist the S.L.P.

April 6, 1938: Telephone call from Britchey; followed by letter to him from National Secretary, S.L.P., quoting Gabow on April 2 re futile visits to Portland representative.

April 9, 1938: From Britchey saying that he hoped to hear from Portland representative, within a few days.

April 11, 1938: To Britchey quoting again from Gabow that "nothing has been done as yet..."

April 16, 1938: From Britchey advising that Portland representa-

tive had attempted to get the District Attorney to take action and that he refused. "The District Attorney's office felt that a prosecution would be unsuccessful." "They also attempted to get the Police Court to take action, but the Police Court refused to issue a warrant." "After these attempts failed Mr. Gabow asked for assistance in filing a civil suit for damages. The matter was taken up with the Executive Board and they felt that filing such an action would bear no fruitful results. They felt it would be impossible to win the case and that if by any chance it was won, there would be no possibility of collection of judgment. Moreover, the filing of such an action would result in court costs of at least \$50, and the local committee has a very small treasury. For these reasons the local committee did not proceed with the case..."

April 16, 1938: To Britchey on above, expressing amazement at their disgraceful attitude, which cannot be obscured by any "amount of evasion or sophistry," that their failure to act in this matter "has been due to [any] discrimination."

April 16, 1938: Gabow left Portland for California. The last statement to Gabow by the Portland representative was that it was a *personal* assault case, and out of the field of the Union's activities of defending civil liberties. April 22 letter to Britchey, quoting Gabow on above.

In the light of these two experiences, which fairly roars with contempt toward the S.L.P., and certainly certifies to the Union's complete lack of interest in cases involving the S.L.P., we can understand and properly interpret Mr. Baldwin's failure to reply to the letter

sent him by the National Secretary of the S.L.P. With particular reference to the Gabow case, the National Secretary had stated in his letter to Mr. Baldwin (of April 22, 1939):

"...when we turned to the American Civil Liberties Union for aid, we were either ignored, or if attention was paid to our requests at all, your local offices managed to procrastinate to the extent of causing us to give up in disgust. A notable example was that of L. Gabow in the city of Portland, Ore., last year. The conduct of your office in Portland with regard to that case, can only be described as scandalous. Your files contain considerable correspondence between your office and our organization relating to this matter."

Silence implying acknowledgment of guilt when charged—silence was the only answer the so very impartial, tolerant, fair and open-minded Mr. Baldwin could give!

As we said in the 1939 report, "...we may as well reconcile ourselves to the realism of the situation which is that we shall probably have to depend in the future, as in the past, on our own efforts to maintain our constitutional rights."

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Other phases of this constantly increasing interference with, and curtailment of, our rights and civil liberties, are the corporation censorship of the radio (already discussed), the reactionary Hatch Law, and the ever multiplying restrictions placed upon the ballot. Like so many other legislative enactments by New Dealers, the Hatch Law is essentially reactionary, although wrapped in the

cellophane of the transparently hypocritical phrases of liberty, equality, purity and all the rest. The Hatch Law may prove a bit irksome to the most brazen politicians, but they soon find ways of circumventing the laws' supposed intent. It is well to bear in mind that in the most reactionary and corrupt governments today—the Mussolini and Hitler regimes, and now also the Stalinist regime—Spartan virtues and purity are acclaimed most vociferously, though observed almost entirely in the breach!

The most sinister aspect of the Hatch Law is that which prohibits political activities on the part of federal employees, and in time, when "little Hatch laws" shall have become part of state legislation everywhere, this will mean, then, that no federal or state employee may participate in political activities other than voting and (under a recent interpretation of the law) other acts of minor importance. Since the trend is toward increasing government employment of larger and larger numbers of people, the conclusion is inescapable that ever growing millions will be deprived of their rights as citizens. If Socialism does not head off the monster variously called State Capitalism, Fascism, Nazism, totalitarianism, or industrial feudalism, the point will eventually be reached when the political State will be the sole employer ("the ideal capitalist," to use Engels's phrase), and with such laws in effect as the Hatch Law, none but the few, including the entrenched bureaucracy, will have the right to take part in political activities, and if the right to vote survives to this stage, that right will then have become practically mean-



ingless. The raucous voice of a former New York State governor sounds through the air in praise of a new revival movement, "I am an American" they call it. In the choice language of this ex-governor, we are told that the young men and women who this year attain the age of twenty-one, through this "I am an American" movement they learn that they have acquired privileges as well as duties, under our democratic form of government, etc., etc. All of which reduces itself to humbug in view of the facts of the Hatch Law and its less obvious, but vitally significant, consequences. The Hatch Law may, we believe, be regarded as the opening wedge for the entry of similar, or still more vicious laws, the sum total of which in the end will present itself as a denizenry of political and economic serfs.

Naturally, we have been much concerned about the effect of the Hatch Law on such immediate problems as conventions, nominations for Presidential electors (which in some states run into quite a number), the securing of signatures for our petitions, etc. In order to secure an official ruling on the effect of the law on such government jobs as W.P.A., etc., a letter was sent to the administrator of the Federal Works Agency at Washington. The reply received reassured us to the extent that it is now settled that S.L.P. members working on the W.P.A. may circulate petitions—that is, members holding no administrative or supervisory positions. For the record, a facsimile reproduction of the letter from Howard O. Hunter, Deputy Commissioner, Federal Works Agency (Works Projects Administration) appears on page 123.

The restrictions placed on minority parties desiring to go on the ballot are becoming increasingly severe, as we have already noted. The tendency is to make it practically impossible for a party such as the S.L.P. to place its ticket on the ballot in a number of states. It is obvious that the politicians are doing all they can, and with malice aforethought, to prevent the rise of a new political party except such as they would approve. If the Party fails to secure sufficient numerical support by the voters generally, and if this reactionary trend is not stopped, and if the evil already wrought is not undone, the point must inevitably be reached when it will be impossible to get on the ballot at all. We need only look at California to realize what we may get up against eventually. It appears to be necessary to conduct a special educational campaign among the workers with regard to this question. That is, it would seem highly desirable to prepare special literature, leaflets presumably, dealing with the subject of ballot restrictions, the ominous implications, not merely to minority groups, but to the mass of the workers eventually. It seems that it should be emphasized in such leaflets that the politicians who prate so much about Americanism are in fact traitors to that which they protest they love so dearly, and that the proof of their treason lies in their turning their backs upon the democratic way of life of the builders of the republic, while extending their hands to welcome the bearer of fascist practices. If it is possible to arouse the workers sufficiently to the danger inherent in the present situation, it may be that we shall be able

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY  
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION  
1734 NEW YORK AVENUE NW.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 11, 1940

Mr. Arnold Petersen  
National Secretary  
Socialist Labor Party  
P. O. Box 1076, Church St. Annex  
New York, New York

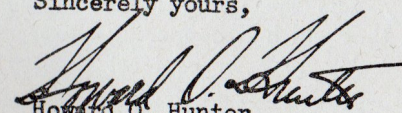
Dear Mr. Petersen:

This will acknowledge your letter of March 7, 1940, addressed to Colonel Harrington, in which you request a ruling as to whether the Hatch Act prevents WPA employees from circulating petitions in behalf of candidates for public office.

The law and regulations of this Administration governing political activity of its employees prohibit persons employed in administrative or supervisory capacities with this Administration from taking part in such activities. However, security wage workers who have no administrative or supervisory authority do not come under these regulations and would, therefore, be permitted to circulate such petitions so long as the activity was not carried on during project working hours or on the project site.

If you desire any further information concerning this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

  
Howard O. Hunter  
Deputy Commissioner



to secure enough support to get on the ballot in most states, which in turn would, of course, enable us to reach ever larger numbers of workers with the Party's message and program.

While the tendency is toward absolutism so long as Socialism is denied a hearing, that is no reason for accepting the otherwise logical fruits of this tendency without a struggle. Once resign the hope and promise that reside in the vote — weak and insufficient though it be in and by itself—and we shall to that extent have eased the way for the “man on horseback” whose strength lies in the disillusionment of the masses, in their frustrated hopes, and in the inevitable defeats, broken pledges and unfulfilled promise of the fatuous reformers, visionaries, and the fakers. For we know that the right to vote goes hand in hand with the freedom to think, the freedom to speak, and we may be sure that when one goes, the others are threatened and will soon vanish also. It appears certain that we shall have to give a good deal of thought to this question before it is too late to do anything at all. In these days when whole nations are wiped out in the twinkling of an eye, we may not expect the reaction to announce its coming in advance, nor may we complacently assume that, after all, these things do not happen here. It is not unreasonable to expect that when, or rather if, the reaction in this country gets the upper hand completely, that which is happening in Europe today may in contrast take on the appearances of a Sunday picnic. For there is no beast like the property-beast aroused, and that beast of property is most fully

developed here in the United States.

There is appended hereto a memorandum revealing some of the difficulties encountered in various states. This is not a complete record, but it sufficiently indicates the unmistakable trend, and reveals the potential danger to a minority party, and the complete disregard of the rights, even under their own laws, by the politicians whenever it suits their convenience to disregard the law. (See footnote p. 117.)

### Internal Difficulties.

#### A—Trials and Errors (Expulsions, etc.)

The four-year period since the last convention has produced its quota of disciplinary cases, with expulsions and/or suspensions resulting. A brief summary only will be given of these, since they were dealt with in detail in the annual reports to the N.E.C. The first was the so-called O'Brien case in Connecticut, commencing already during the 1936 campaign, which reached scandalous proportions before it was finally terminated. While O'Brien was the chief offender, his disgraceful conduct could not have caused the damage it did had it not been for the weakness of the then State Executive Committee which failed largely in its duty to protect Party integrity and Party interests. O'Brien was finally expelled. Later, five members of Section Hartford were expelled as a direct result of the O'Brien incident. In the case of these five we are confronted with the familiar blend of stubbornness and stupidity, rather than conscious vic-

iousness in wrongdoing. Their conduct, however, left the Party no choice but to get rid of them.

During the period of 1937-1938 we had quite a lot of trouble in different parts of the country. First there was the case of the faithless South Slavonian Federation secretary. He was expelled under circumstances that left an indelible stain upon his character. In Section Peoria, Ill., three were expelled, and two or three dropped out as a direct result of these expulsions, reducing the Section to an extent that made it necessary to disband it, and to constitute the remaining members a Branch of Section Fulton Co., Ill. Out in California there was a somewhat distant echo of the Ruiz-Schnur disruption, in the case of Caesar Booth who (apparently suffering from delusions of grandeur) like his illustrious namesake tried to hold the world in awe, but could not even expel the flaw of his winter's discontent! However, staggering under the weight of two such names as Caesar and Booth, one should perhaps not wonder that he caved in! He promptly found shelter in the S. L.P. Garbage Can of previously expelled disrupters. In Rockford, Ill., one C.E. Crawford, whose collapse as an S.L.P. man had been noticeable for some time, revealed himself as a double-dealing traitor, and also promptly landed in the Garbage Can—or, rather, it was discovered that he had been residing in it even while enjoying the honor of S.L.P. membership, and therein lay his double-dealing treachery. There were a few additional expulsions, including the rather pathetic case of Sidney Armer, who was expelled by Section Wayne Co., Mich. A one-time clear

and loyal S.L.P. man, gone wrong due, perhaps, primarily to what seemed a partial nervous or mental collapse. At the time of his expulsion Armer might well have said with Byron—

“... I am not now  
That which I have been.”

Armer, the one-time loyal S.L.P. man and superb artist, will be gratefully remembered. The sooner the latter-day Armer is forgotten, the greater the mercy.

During the period of 1938-1939 there were but few expulsions. They included another member of many years' standing, John Rowe, who slandered his way out of the Party, the victim of his slanders and vilifications being primarily Comrade William Woodhouse.

During the period of 1939-1940 there were expulsions numbering sixteen and two suspensions. The expulsions included four from the South Slavonian Federation and one from the Bulgarian Federation. Of the two suspensions, one of them—J. Stoltenberg of Section Milwaukee—constituted a reduced sentence, so to speak, Stoltenberg having been originally expelled, but on appeal it was found that his offense did not warrant expulsion, and he was declared suspended for six months. He was reinstated in August, 1939, and was again suspended for one month by Section Milwaukee in January this year. But this is part of the story of the dissension and disturbances inside Section Milwaukee. A reference to this situation was made in the report to the N.E.C. in 1939, and it was then hoped that the trouble would be settled without casualties, but this was not to be. The most amazing feature of the situation in



Milwaukee was the conduct and subsequent self-elimination of five members whose records in the Party had been such that it would have been considered impossible a year before that they could ever have been guilty of such misconduct. If there is the least grain of S.L.P. manhood left in these five, the crimson blush of shame must mount their cheeks whenever they reflect on their conduct, and the injury they inflicted on the S.L.P., to which they owed so much, as do we all. The five were Joe and Charles Ehrhardt, sons of an honored S.L.P. man of the Hungarian Federation; John Schleier, Mary Ehrhardt and Abe Fisher. There is simply no accounting for the conduct of these five men on rational or honorable grounds. Assuming that they did not all collapse mentally, their conduct revealed flaws in their characters, and a weakness in moral and intellectual fibre, that would eventually have proved fatal to their S.L.P. membership. They literally ran away, but if they believed that they could run away from themselves or their records, they are badly mistaken. For to run away from trouble that *must* be faced in the integrity of one's manhood is neither reasonable nor honorable.

The story is a long and a pathetic one, the telling of which would consume scores of pages and hours in recital. It has cost the National Office dearly in precious time and in money, just as all such cases do. In recording it briefly here, substantial justice is done to the demands of S.L.P. history. In a letter ordered sent to the Section by the N. E.C. Sub-Committee on August 24 last, the story is told in outline. It

should be noted here that both Comrades Bopp and Quinn were sent to Milwaukee in the hope that the Section might be preserved intact, Comrade Quinn taking particular pains to reason with the five mentioned before. But all in vain. The letter of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee of last August follows:

"To the Organizer and Members of Section Milwaukee, Wis.

"Dear Comrades:

"The N.E.C. Sub-Committee has given careful consideration to the voluminous letters and reports presented to it in connection with the internal difficulties that arose in Section Milwaukee, which for so many months have undoubtedly acted as a brake on the proper functioning of the Section, even though (to the credit of the majority of the Section membership) these difficulties did not result in completely disrupting or paralyzing the Section's activities. We have arrived at the following main conclusions:

"1. While at first it appeared that the trouble in the Section was caused originally by the Stoltenberg case, and the dissatisfaction of certain members with the Sub-Committee's decision on Comrade Stoltenberg's appeal, it seems quite clear now that the Stoltenberg case was merely one of many incidents that took place during several years—incidents more or less related—and that the dissatisfaction with the Sub-Committee's action on Comrade Stoltenberg's appeal (while undoubtedly present) merely constituted the climax of the long train of events resulting from internal friction not necessarily relating to the Stoltenberg case, and the clashing of oppos-

ing personalities. As Comrade Quinn says in his report (copy of which is enclosed), referring to the result of his investigations which, he says, 'conclusively show one thing: ...that in the Section there are [were] two well developed factions,' and that 'mistakes have been made by both factions,' and that the Section as a whole had failed to observe 'proper Party procedure,' one result of which having been that members would indulge in personalities, sometimes shockingly so, without (as stated) proper correctives being applied.

"2. We further conclude that there has at no time been any attempt at deliberate disruption, or conscious disagreement with Party principles generally, although one of the most vital principles has been flagrantly disregarded, or violated, by adherents of both 'factions'—to wit, the organization principle and Party discipline. The violence with which the organization principle has been assaulted, or disregarded (particularly by the five who tendered their resignations), establishes the fact that the incompatibilities among certain members were, and are, so great as to preclude the possibility, now or in the future, of their ever being able to work together in a harmonious and comradely spirit.

"3. The fact is disclosed that among the membership there are some to whom the S.L.P. principles and organization mean little or nothing, while their egos and personal comforts or conveniences apparently mean everything to them. We refer here particularly to the five who tendered their resignations. The presence of such individuals in a revolutionary organization (especially such

a one as the S.L.P., and, above all, at such times as these) obviously constitutes a menace to the safety of the Party, and to the future security of fellow members, for he who now will throw overboard principles because of a bruised ego, or because his or her personal comforts or conveniences suffer as a result of membership in the S.L.P.—such a one would hardly hesitate to desert or betray his fellow-members in a major revolutionary crisis, nor would he or she hesitate to sacrifice the Party's vital interests, at a critical moment, on the altar of egotism and egoism.

"4. The further fact is disclosed that some of the members, as already stated, have thrown to the winds all restraint, and all consideration for the spirit of fraternal fellowship that should bind members of the S. L.P. together, in their abusive language, and slanderous references to other members of the Section, while other members appear to have acted on the principle (unconsciously or otherwise) that the end justifies the means—that is, they seem to have employed methods scarcely to their credit, though their intentions and the desired end probably were laudable enough. Thus, with regard to the former, the conduct of Joe Ehrhardt and A. Fisher has been utterly inexcusable and reprehensible in the highest degree, while the conduct of Mary and Charles Ehrhardt, and John Schleier, has been such as to merit severest condemnation, partly because of their positive support of the organization anarchism, and improper conduct generally, of the two first-mentioned members, and partly because of their contribution (negatively, in the main, perhaps) to the spirit of disruption rampant at one



time in the Section as a result of clashing egos.

"On the other hand, the conduct of such members as John Stoltenberg and Arnold Fortman has also left much to be desired. Since Comrade Stoltenberg has suffered punishment for his transgressions, nothing more need be said concerning his past mistakes, except to express the hope that he will have learned a bitter lesson from these mistakes and their consequences, and that henceforth he will pull in harness and observe strict discipline, with respect to decisions of the Section.

"In the case of Comrade Fortman, we are constrained to observe that his (in part) proven and admitted misconduct deserved administration of some degree of punishment, but in the light of the Section's own failure to observe order and discipline as a whole, and concluding that Comrade Fortman, too, has learned a bitter and apparently much needed lesson, the N.E.C. Sub-Committee is content to consider the case of Comrade Fortman likewise closed, with this proviso: Since Comrade Fortman's offense was the second one in recent years, if there *should* be a recurrence of similar offenses on the part of Comrade Fortman, the Section is directed in such eventuality to take drastic action, and in no way to 'temper justice with mercy.'

"5. We cannot know definitely whether the five 'dissenting' members would have acted in a manner essentially different from the one they adopted if the Sub-Committee's decision on the Stoltenberg appeal had been such as to meet with their approval. This we do know, and the fact must be strongly emphasized, that in their reactions to the Sub-

Committee's decision on the Stoltenberg appeal, they proved themselves in open rebellion against a decision by the N.E.C. Sub-Committee, which under the Constitution the Committee was charged with rendering, and in the rendering of which the Sub-Committee, and its special Grievance Committee, expended a great deal of time and honest thinking. By rising in rebellion against the Sub-Committee's decision on the Stoltenberg appeal, the five 'dissenters' expressed their contempt for the constitution, which they themselves had assisted in preparing and adopting, as well as the organizational principle which they had been so eager and relentless to invoke in the charges against Comrade Stoltenberg. Moreover, the protestations of the five 'dissenters' notwithstanding, their rebellion constituted an utterly unwarranted affront to the Sub-Committee itself, an affront which in effect amounted to saying that the N.E.C. Sub-Committee had not given honest, conscientious and intelligent consideration to the charges against Comrade Stoltenberg, or that the Sub-Committee had special reasons for acting as it did on the Stoltenberg appeal. The contemptible attitude of the five 'dissenters' in this respect emphasizes their absolute anti-organizational conceptions and conduct. We say advisedly 'contemptible,' since nothing else can properly describe it. In a democratic organization, which is completely in the hands of the rank and file, and in which every individual member has an equal and untrammelled right to contribute to the formulation of constitutional rules and procedure, it is cowardly and contemptible to disregard these self-determined rules when they affect

adversely one's wishes or preferences. What the 'dissenting' members, who revolted because of the Sub-Committee's decision on the Stoltenberg appeal—what in effect they said was this: 'We approve entirely the Party's constitution, and the Party's rulings, if and when *we* can apply them against those with whom we disagree. But we utterly disapprove of them when they prevent us from having our way, or when they are applied against us. If we can make the rules of "the game," and change them during "the game" to suit ourselves, we will play. Otherwise, if we must abide by the rules we ourselves helped to make, when to do so goes against our interests or pleasures, then we don't want to play.' In the sporting world such an attitude automatically would bar from the play those holding it, and they would be looked upon with scorn or contempt. What shall we say, then, when such craven, or unsportsmanlike, attitude finds expression in a revolutionary organization, where abiding by the rules may conceivably become a matter of life and death to those who are determined to 'play the game' according to the rules, fairly and honorably?

"6. There is one thing more to be noted for the record, namely, the claims of the five who tendered their resignations, that Comrade Bopp had made false and misleading statements concerning them, and who further claimed that they were denied the opportunity to 'defend' themselves against these alleged false and misleading statements. We find no evidence of any false and misleading statements having been made by Comrade Bopp. Whatever the 'resigners' may think of the opin-

ions expressed by Comrade Bopp, there has been no misstatement of facts, and the 'resigners' have submitted no proof.

"As to their claim that they have been denied an opportunity to defend themselves against what they conceived to be false and misleading statements by Comrade Bopp, we find no basis for that claim. Comrade Bopp's statement with regard to the Stoltenberg case being closed was a factual statement, a statement recording a legal or technical fact. It did not mean, and could not have meant, that if one or all of the five resigning members had been, in fact, misrepresented or unjustly branded in a manner reflecting on their characters or conduct—if they had been so treated, that they would not be permitted to submit a statement of *fact*—relevant fact or facts—to refute the alleged misleading statements concerning them. Subsequent developments proved that they were not sincere in their protestations. The five resigning members had been invited (rather urged) to attend the Section meeting of July 14. Three of them attended, namely, Joe and Mary Ehrhardt, and Abe Fisher. According to Comrade Quinn (in his letter to the National Secretary of July 17), 'three of the dissenters came to the meeting, took the floor, and by their feeble efforts proved to the members—if proof was still needed—how utterly unable they were to present reasonable evidence of the incorrectness of the things Bopp had said about them in his reply to the Section's rebuttal. The talk of Joe Ehrhardt and A. Fisher, summed up, amounted to the word of these two members against that of Bopp. Bopp's statements, how-



ever, were based upon the testimony of one or more comrades, while Ehrhardt's and Fisher's statements were unsupported by anyone but themselves.' Comrade Quinn adds that he 'encountered ample evidence from members to prove the correctness of practically everything that Bopp said about these individuals.' So much for these three.

"As to Charles Ehrhardt and John Schleier, they did not even deign to appear, or to send excuses for not appearing, nor did they submit to the aforementioned meeting any written statement in lieu of any oral statement they otherwise might have made before the meeting. In failing to do one or the other, these two in effect confessed that they had no case—that they had no statements to make which would, or could, controvert Comrade Bopp's 'report.'

"It is important to note these facts for the record. Our experience in the past, and considering the recent conduct of these five 'dissenters,' should prepare us for the usual charge of 'unfair' or 'dictatorial' treatment given those who in one way or another develop differences with the Party. And let there be no mistake about it! Joe, Mary and Charles Ehrhardt, as well as John Schleier and Abe Fisher, are in violent disagreement with, and rebellion against, the Socialist Labor Party, its principles and organization. In throwing overboard their membership, for a light or frivolous cause (if cause there was at all), they have thrown overboard the principles as well. For, once again, the principles and the organization are one—ONE AND INDIVISIBLE.

"7. The chief problem confronting the Party is: what to do about

the five members who so wantonly threw overboard their Party membership, and with that the great principle to which they had pledged solemn allegiance. In the cases of these five—to wit, Joe and Mary Ehrhardt, Charles Ehrhardt, John Schleier, and Abe Fisher—the judgment of the Party must be the severest, and in the cases particularly of Joe Ehrhardt and Abe Fisher expulsion would certainly in normal circumstances be the proper punishment, while—in normal circumstances—suspensions for prolonged periods would be proper and just in the cases of Mary Ehrhardt, Charles Ehrhardt and John Schleier. The suggestions made by Comrade Quinn in his report (which he has since withdrawn as impracticable, or not fitting the offenses) cannot be accepted by the N.E.C. Sub-Committee. Taking into consideration the fact that Section Milwaukee as a whole, and members individually, were guilty of anti-organizational acts; taking further into consideration the fact that by their conduct the aforementioned five members have revealed weaknesses in character, and lack of understanding of the serious responsibility adhering to membership in the S.L.P.—taking all this into consideration, the N.E.C. Sub-Committee directs Section Milwaukee to accept the resignations of Joe and Mary Ehrhardt, Charles Ehrhardt, John Schleier and Abe Fisher, with the proviso that they be placed in the category of expelled individuals, not to be readmitted to membership in the Socialist Labor Party in the future, these five having, as stated, proved themselves completely disqualified, as well as wholly unworthy of the great honor

of enjoying membership in the Socialist Labor Party. Section Milwaukee is further directed to advise the said Joe and Mary Ehrhardt, Charles Ehrhardt, John Schleier and Abe Fisher, of this decision, and the conforming decision of the Section, sending to each a copy of this statement, so that they may remain in no doubt with respect to their unpardonable offense against the Socialist Labor Party, principles and organization, and so that, further, they may fully comprehend the abhorrence with which their conduct and desertion are held by the Socialist Labor Party, and the attitude that loyal S.L.P. men and women will hereafter assume toward them. Before accepting the resignations of these five, however, the Section is directed to ascertain whether or not they are under any financial, or other property, obligations to the S.L.P. If they have in their possession collection lists, or other matter of actual or potential value belonging to the Socialist Labor Party, they must account to the Party in full for all such matters before their resignations may be accepted.

"The question having been raised as to the matter of fraternizing with these five, with particular reference to those closely related to them, the N.E.C. Sub-Committee advises Section Milwaukee that in cases of close family relationship, association between members and expelled disrupters, or those placed in the category of expelled individuals, does not constitute fraternizing with expelled disrupters. The Party recognizes that it cannot be expected that loyal Party members will, or necessarily should, break off all relations with fathers, sons, daughters, husbands or

wives, even though these had been expelled as disrupters, or placed in that category because of their misconduct.

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"The N.E.C. Sub-Committee hopes and expects that Section Milwaukee will now resume, 100 per cent, its activities in behalf of the Party's program and principles, undaunted by the recent unpleasant experience, and remembering only the grave responsibilities, and great task, resting upon the Party and its members, in this world crisis, fate-freighted as it is for our class and our Party. We owe a duty to our class and to our glorious traditions, no less than to our posterity, as well as to the interests of our suffering fellow-workers. Let us rise superior to all obstacles; let us subordinate our personal and private feelings and interests, to the end that the emancipation of the working class may be effected in our time, which means that we must work together in harmony, and concentrate our efforts in fulfillment of our pledge that—

**"CAPITALISM MUST BE DESTROYED!"**

"By instruction of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee,

"Fraternally yours,  
(Signed) "Arnold Petersen,  
"National Secretary."

Several of the hopes expressed in this letter have not been realized. Instead of closing this unpleasant and, in so many respects, disgraceful interlude, strife broke out anew within a few months, this time provoked by Comrade Stoltenberg, who wantonly preferred groundless, and



highly frivolous, charges against the then organizer, Comrade A. Potter, who (so far as the National Office has been able to observe) conscientiously strove to uphold the Sub-Committee's decisions, though possibly not in complete agreement with all its conclusions. Several other charges and counter-charges were filed, and the N.E.C. Sub-Committee had to step in once again, directing the Section to dismiss some of the charges as improper or utterly groundless, or to try charges that had been dismissed by the Section, though definitely in order. As a result, Comrade Stoltenberg was again suspended, this time for one month—a period ridiculously out of proportion to the seriousness of the offense committed—an offense prompted either by profound ignorance of the organization principle involved, or by a desire openly to flout the N.E.C. Sub-Committee with respect to its previous instructions to the Sections to close the previous incident, or incidents. Unless there has been a marked change for the better recently, the situation in Section Milwaukee may best be described as a state of truce. The National Office plans to place Comrade Pirincin in the Milwaukee-Chicago territory shortly after the Convention, and we hope that he will be able to reawaken, or instil into the minds of the members, a sense of responsibility, and a recognition of their duties to the organization which they claim they desire to serve. It is humiliating to reflect that after all the experience the Party has had with such matters, such disgraceful incidents could happen in a Section such as Milwaukee, which we had almost come to look upon as an impregnable fortress of

S.L.P. discipline and organization loyalty. The majority of the members in Section Milwaukee have—for one reason or another—cause to feel thoroughly ashamed of themselves: for they have shown once again that what the out-and-out enemy is unable to do, they have brought about through that evil combination of personal vanity, corrosive egotism, false pride, stubborn resistance to reason and common sense, insufficient understanding of organization principles, and disregard of the vital, the basic interests of the organization.

In Buffalo, N.Y., there has, for some years, persisted a situation not unlike that in Milwaukee. Superficially here, too, there seems to be a clashing of personalities, though one sometimes wonders whether after all there may not be deeper causes. Both the New York S.E.C. and the National Office have for years tried to get to the bottom of the real trouble—if there is a bottom! Buffalo, as you will remember, was the domain, so to speak, of the unscrupulous Boris Reinstein, whose evil cunning—having wrought so much damage to the S.L.P.—has received, and perhaps still is receiving, its proper reward in Stalinist Russia. Buffalo also became the adopted home of the unscrupulous and corrupted Rudolph Katz. Whether the seeds of disruption and treason sown by these two unprincipled arch-conspirators and Machiavellians are still sprouting is perhaps not subject to actual proof, but to one who went through the harrowing experience of handling this gentry twenty-odd years ago, it is difficult to shake off the feeling that there may be forces of disruption in the background which suc-

cessfully have defied detection, and which (if actually present) with equal success has kept the Party from getting firmly established in that large industrial city.

Recently there was another flare-up which resulted in the expulsion of one John Wroblewski, whose connections with the Party reach into the past. In the manner typical of the organization anarchist, he began to write violently slanderous letters to the National Office, the particular object of his venom being the organizer, Comrade Papadopolos. This followed a protracted series of tumultuous Section meetings where practically no work was done, but where trivial or foolish questions were permitted to consume the greater part of the time that should have been devoted to constructive work. Finally Wroblewski was expelled. Wroblewski apparently has succeeded in taking with him one other member, one Kaznowski, who, however, has remained in the background, Wroblewski vouching for Kaznowski's support in his treason to the Party, very much as if he, Wroblewski, owned Kaznowski, body and soul. Perhaps he does. If not, it must be assumed that he succeeded in poisoning the mind of Kaznowski, who by this time is either expelled, or on the way out. [Information has just been received that Kaznowski was expelled, having defied the summons of the Section to appear before the Grievance Committee.] The case of such people as Kaznowski must ever remind us of the truth that a villainous slander sleeps comfortably in a fool's ear.

Whether Wroblewski is simply ignorant and stubborn, or a wilful disrupter, may never be known. It is

likely that he is the more fool than villain. If there is truth in the saying that a fool and his money are soon parted, there is even greater truth in insisting that a fool and his folly are not divorcible. One sticks to the other with the tenacity born of the primitive urge never willingly to let go of what is truly one's own! Folly and ignorance, said Shakespeare, are the common curse of mankind. It is indeed unpleasant to have to acknowledge this in application to a situation within the S.L.P.

It is expected that before long complete order will be restored in Buffalo, and that Section Erie Co. will soon take its place among Sections that mean to go places, and know how to get to them.

#### B—Errors, Trials and Tribulations. (Criticisms, Dissensions and Adjustments.)

Under this general head must be considered the trouble which arose out of the intellectual and functional collapse of the former Editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE. There is no need of repeating the known facts, but for the record mention must be made briefly of the basic facts. In the summer of 1937 (the summer we moved into our new quarters), the then Editor, Comrade Olive M. Johnson, revealed herself as completely incompetent and irresponsible, leading to her resignation being tendered to take effect at the N. E.C. Session in 1938. Being piqued at the Sub-Committee's rejection of a worthless essay on the labor movement in the United States, and perhaps for other reasons of her own, she committed the shocking act of walking out on her job, without re-



gard to her duties and responsibilities to the organization, formally tendering her resignation to take effect as of February 12, 1938—that is, her letter of resignation was received on February 14! Had this been done by a subordinate employe, it would still have been a disgraceful act. But this act being committed by a person who supposedly was wearing the cloak of the immortal De Leon, one stands bewildered and pondering. The ex-Editor was properly and severely condemned by the N.E.C. Sub-Committee, and later by the N.E.C., and narrowly escaped expulsion. Though shocked, the membership apparently unanimously approved the action taken by the National Office and by the N.E.C. to deal with the consequences resulting from the ex-Editor's desertion of an important post. After an interlude, during which Comrade Emil F. Teichert served as Acting Editor, the membership elected Comrade Eric Hass to fill the important post of National Editor. This Convention, and the membership generally, must be the judge with regard to the extent of the improvement in the contents and appearance of the WEEKLY PEOPLE. That new life, greater force and vigor, more brilliancy have been infused in the WEEKLY PEOPLE (now in its fiftieth year), is apparently universally conceded. During the trying interlude Comrade Teichert performed his duties competently and conscientiously, ably assisted by the secretary of the former Editor, Miss Florence A. Wills—now Comrade Florence A. Wills. It becomes our duty to make the WEEKLY PEOPLE far better known than it is now, in order that it may attain that

circulation and influence which its scientific and literary contents deserve, and which its importance as the *bona fide* American Marxian journal demands.

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There have been some criticisms and dissenting opinions presented during the last couple of years, most of them emanating from Section Wayne County (Detroit). These have been dealt with as they were received, and apparently settled to the Section's satisfaction, though the National Secretary's reply to the most recent criticism from Detroit still awaits the Section's reactions. Not all the criticisms came from Section Wayne County officially—several came from one or two members as individuals. We count no less than eight such "critiques" since the summer of 1938, including two from an individual member—one on De Leon's and the Party's contentions with regard to the degree of exploitation (this comrade contending that the workers receive from 70 per cent to 80 per cent of the total wealth produced every year); and one on the manner in which the howling Fascist-Ultramontane priest Coughlin's sheet was handled in correspondence from the National Office; while from another individual member there has been criticism of the Party's analysis of the functions of the State, with particular reference to the Stalinist contention that the State is needed in Russia for purely military reasons! Some rather startling views and opinions have been expressed, particularly in the letters from the individual members.

With regard to the official criticisms of the Section, these began

with the letter received in 1938. It was printed in the 1939 N.E.C. report together with the reply of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee, and needs no further comment here. The next was a criticism of the manner in which N.E.C. Sessions and National Conventions were conducted—or rather, the manner in which our Detroit comrades thought they were conducted. Since several rather important points and misconceptions are involved in this connection, the correspondence is produced herewith:

"Detroit, Mich.,  
August 23, 1939.

"Mr. Arnold Petersen,  
National Secretary, etc.  
"Dear Comrade Petersen:

"The following statement was adopted at the regular General Section meeting on Sunday, August 20, and is hereby submitted to the National Office for consideration:

"Section Wayne County is assuming that the procedure in past N.E.C. meetings and National Conventions has been the reading of National Office reports that consumed up to the better part of one whole day. Inasmuch as N.E.C. meetings and National Conventions usually last up to three days, one-third of the precious time is spent listening to the above report.

"Section Wayne County wonders if this procedure of reading the entire report could not be eliminated in favor of a more efficient disposition of the Party's time. Perhaps the National Secretary could give a summary in place of reading the entire report. If, as we assume is the case, that N.E.C. members are already in possession of certain information embodied in the National Office's re-

port, does not this in itself render superfluous the rereading of the correspondence in the hands of N.E.C. members?

"Our Section is convinced that if the National Office report could be placed in the hands of N.E.C. Members and Delegates to the National Conventions two weeks beforehand for them to study, that a more intelligent discussion and more efficient handling of the Party's problems would result.

"Of course, the Section realizes that the task of getting the report made up is a tremendous one, but we cannot see how the task would be made heavier by having it finished two weeks earlier. It is our conviction that the temporary inconvenience of preparing the reports two weeks earlier would be more than recompensed by the increased preparedness of the N.E.C. members and National Convention Delegates for their responsible task of formulating the Party's policies during the next year and four years respectively.

"We submit the above for your consideration.

"Fraternally yours,  
(Signed) "Clayton O'Donohue,  
Organizer,  
Section Wayne County."

The following reply was sent:

"New York, N.Y.,  
August 25, 1939.

"Mr. Clayton O'Donohue,  
Section Wayne County, Mich., etc.

"Dear Comrade O'Donohue:

"I received your letter of August 23. I have read the Section's statement adopted at the regular General



Section meeting of August 20 with interest and considerable surprise. While it is commendable and eminently desirable that Sections and members take a serious interest in the administration of the Party's affairs, it seems to me that Section Wayne County might take it for granted that the National Office and the N.E.C. are quite competent to handle matters of a purely routine and executive nature. If the Section cannot take that for granted, allow me to assure the Section that the National Office and the National Executive Committee really are fully competent to do so, with very particular reference to the points dealt with in the Section's statement.

"Speaking for myself, I reject the Section's gratuitous assumption, or inference, that the reading of the annual reports constitutes a waste of the Party's time, or that the present procedure lessens in any sense or degree the possibilities of an 'intelligent discussion' or the 'efficient handling of the Party's problems.' In my judgment, it is 'far otherwise and to the contrary.' The reading of the report places the 'problems' directly before the N.E.C. members, the points are fresh in their minds, and, besides, each member is supplied with a copy of the report so that at his leisure, or at various committee sessions (I mean various committees elected to report on this or that), he can study more carefully those parts in which he is especially interested, or concerning which he may have had some doubt.

"That Section Wayne County acted hastily, and without due consideration and forethought, in adopting this statement, seems obvious to me. For one thing, the Section pre-

sumes to advise on matters concerning which it has no proper information. The Section might at least have asked for the information it lacked before adopting such a statement. In the first place, the N.E.C. Sessions do not normally last up to three days. On the average they consume less than two days. In the second place, the reading of the N.E.C. report does *not* consume a day—rarely does it take more than four or five hours to read it. In the third place, the National Secretary does *not* read the report in its entirety. Large sections of the report are included for the record, and, when such parts are reached, the National Secretary records that fact and says that with the consent of the N.E.C. this part will be omitted in reading. In the fourth place, except for brief references through Sub-Committee minutes, N.E.C. members, for quite obvious reasons, are not familiar with the details of 'problems' dealt with in the National Secretary's report, unless such 'problems' develop to the stage where action by the N.E.C. is required between sessions. Obviously the National Office has not the facilities for supplying copies to N.E.C. members of all the correspondence that is received by and leaves the National Office—correspondence which often reaches 'mountainous' proportions at Sub-Committee meetings. Besides, in so far as 'problems' grow out of, or are features of, such correspondence, which might conceivably require N.E.C. action, that fact (if it be fact) self-evidently would not be revealed, or finally determined, until such correspondence has been brought to a close, and then, as stated, if action is imperative, the matter is referred to the

N.E.C. by mail. Otherwise, it is referred to the N.E.C. in session through the National Secretary's report. Except in this sense, and in such cases, the N.E.C. members are *not* 'in possession of certain information embodied in the National Office's report. . . .' In any case, there is rarely, if ever, an instance of 're-reading of . . . correspondence in the hands of N.E.C. members.' That, too, the Section might have taken for granted.

"Another indication of the too hasty action of the Section in adopting the statement are the obvious contradictions in the statement. On the one hand the Section assumes that the N.E.C. members already are in possession of information regarding the 'problems' to be handled (*vide* point about 're-reading of the correspondence,' etc.) at N.E.C. Sessions; on the other hand, the Section pleads that the report be placed in the hands of the N.E.C. members two weeks earlier so that they may 'study' the problems—problems with which the Section had previously assumed they were familiar!

"It would neither be possible nor practicable to adopt the Section's suggestion with respect to placing reports 'in the hands of N.E.C. members and delegates to the National Conventions two weeks beforehand. . . .' First, the preparing of the report is not an automatic or machine process. Secondly, the National Secretary cannot retire into a vacuum on, say, February 8, and then emerge on April 8, with the report completed in so many duplicate, typewritten copies. Work on the report is usually started early in March. Intermittently sections are prepared, but, for a number of practical reasons, not

completed until later. Statistics have to be compiled, the final figures frequently not available until the (almost) eleventh hour. Certain 'problems' requiring action by the N.E.C. often are not 'developed' until the very eve of the N.E.C. Session. And, generally speaking, it would be undesirable to complete the report two or three weeks (it would mean *three weeks*, of course, if N.E.C. members were to receive copies 'two weeks beforehand') in advance of the N.E.C. Session, for the same reason that it is undesirable to print a paper too far in advance of publication date. Moreover, with the best of intentions, it would be next to impossible for the National Secretary, in the midst of dealing with the many day-to-day problems of the office, to complete the report three whole weeks before the Session. The human tendency is to deal with those problems that *imperatively* demand immediate attention, and to defer action on those which, in fact, *can* suffer delay without serious or irreparable harm being caused. In that, as in other respects, the National Secretary acknowledges his human weakness, if weakness it be!

"The Section has also overlooked the important fact that the N.E.C. does not take office until May 1. In other words, if the report were to be sent to the N.E.C. two weeks in advance of the Session, it would be the *outgoing*, and not the *incoming*, N.E.C. which would receive it. It is, of course, no argument that the members of the *incoming* N.E.C. may be the same as the members of the *outgoing* N.E.C., since they might be entirely new members, as, indeed, has happened, and logically could happen any time. Moreover, the Na-



tional Secretary does not necessarily know (sometimes he *definitely* does not know) three weeks in advance who will compose the incoming N.E.C., and he has no right to act on assumptions in this respect, and certainly would not do so.

"The Section seems to have forgotten the limitations of facilities and help at National Headquarters. We think we are quite efficient, and that a tremendous lot is accomplished with our limited force and facilities, but, after all, we are not magicians, and we *are* made of flesh and bones and nerves, subject to all the ills that Shakespeare speaks of! This fact is particularly relevant when we now consider the Section's inclusion of conventions in its not so very helpful suggestions. Conventions are usually attended by around fifty Delegates. Apart from the fact that in many cases information as to who will be the Delegates from certain states, or from the Federations, is not available until almost the very eve of a Convention—apart from that fact, has the Section given the slightest thought to what it means to type fifty or more copies of a report running to upward of 300 typewritten pages? Our normal office force would not be equal to it. To hire extra help would be out of the question on such short notice, and for such a short period—even if help were available that would be qualified for such highly specialized work as an S.L.P. Convention report. And even if help *were* available, we should be spending money to 'save' time which no one has considered it necessary to 'save'—or, rather, which no one had ever thought was being wasted! And to print such reports would be impossible, since with our

mechanical facilities it usually takes a couple of months to produce printed copies of such reports.

"All in all, the problems involved (to which the Section apparently has not given a moment's thought) are so many, and so difficult, that I can only again express my amazement that the Section could have adopted the statement it did; and here, it seems to me, it is pertinent to say something about wasting (or, if you like, *saving*) the Party's valuable time. Section Wayne County has a large field in which to work; it has a large and active membership to do this work; and excellent work has, indeed, been done, and is being done by the Section. But valuable time could have been saved for doing *more* of that excellent work if the Section would have thought these matters out, or secured the necessary information, before adopting a 'statement.' In this respect the Section is but repeating its performance of a year ago when it undertook to criticize and instruct in matters concerning the WEEKLY PEOPLE—matters about which, in large measure, the Section knew, and could know, nothing, and on which the Section did not trouble to post itself before criticizing and 'instructing.'

"I regret to say this, but I believe the time has come for some plain speaking, if we are not to be compelled in the future to waste time, as has been done on this, as well as on the previous, occasion. For while it may be argued that if out of this, as of the correspondence of last year, good may come because of information imparted, or greater understanding acquired, and that, accordingly, no time was really wasted—while that may be argued, it can

also, with far greater force and reasonableness, be argued that it should not have been necessary to give time to such—shall we say education? It certainly *can* be argued that the members of Section Wayne County should have thought these matters out carefully; that they should have insisted that those who proposed this amazing statement should have (through the Section, of course) secured the information needed, before adopting statements that criticize, or presume to instruct, where neither criticism, nor instruction, is in place—provided, of course, that the members should have found it necessary to criticize or instruct in matters that come entirely within National Office or executive routine.

"If the Section is concerned about saving the Party's time (as I believe it is, and as it properly should be), may I suggest that hereafter careful consideration be given to the time-wasting involved in submitting 'statements' such as the last two adopted, with particular reference to the time wasted by the National Secretary in having to write letters of this nature. This is Friday—always a very busy day, and particularly after a Sub-Committee meeting, which (like that of last night) lasted until midnight, with a mass of important Party business that brings exhaustion to all concerned. Instead of devoting my time to the work that results from a Sub-Committee meeting, I have felt obliged to devote a great deal of time to the preparation of this letter. For while I might have delayed doing so, the work and terrific pressure at the National Office is such that if I did not attend to it immediately, I would probably find it necessary to defer action indefinitely,

with the result that a perfunctory, or wholly inadequate, reply might be given the Section later. And so, I repeat, let us save the Party's time, and let us do it where it is sensible and possible to do it, and let us each do our work in the spheres where, for one reason or another, we are best qualified to do it.

"In conclusion, let me remind the comrades of Section Wayne County that these reports have been rendered in the identical manner for a good many years. It is reasonable to suppose that if those (that is, the N.E.C. members) on whom the reading is 'inflicted' thought that the reporting could have been done in less time or more efficiently, they would themselves have taken steps to shorten the time or to increase the efficiency of rendering these reports. It is extraordinary, to say the least, that members situated hundreds of miles from New York, few of whom have ever attended an N.E.C. Session or National Convention, should have felt the need of raising any question about the alleged waste of time, etc., in rendering reports at N.E.C. Sessions, etc.

"I shall, of course, submit this correspondence to the next Sub-Committee meeting, and time permitting copies will also be sent to the N.E.C. members, together with copies of the Section's letter.

"Fraternally yours,  
(Signed) "Arnold Petersen,  
"National Secretary."

The Section subsequently graciously acknowledged its error, and that closed this incident.

Quite recently the Section submitted a criticism, with request for clarification, on the Party's pam-



phlet "Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace?" or, more specifically, the criticism concerned itself with a point in Appendix B of that pamphlet, relating to the matter of Lenin's (and now the Stalinists') silly and un-Marxian contentions regarding the alleged evolution of "Socialism" into "Communism," and the would-be "scientific difference" between "Socialism" and "Communism," the Section contending that Engels, and not Lenin, was originally responsible for the claims made aforesaid. In view of the importance of the subject, and the need for clarifying ourselves, the Section's criticism and the National Secretary's reply are here reproduced:

"[Section Wayne Co., Mich.

"Endorsed at Meeting Held  
February 18, 1940.]

"*Re Appendix B of Pamphlet,  
SOVIET RUSSIA.*

"At the August 6, 1939, General Section meeting your committee was elected to study and report on the criticism made against the Appendix B of the pamphlet Soviet Russia. The committee has met three times to exchange notes and to discuss the material they had collected individually. While there was not unanimity on all the points raised by the criticism, the committee was unanimous in requesting the National Office for more information.

"Page 59, Appendix B, of Soviet Russia, quotes in part from Lenin's *State and Revolution*: 'And here we come to that question of the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism....' It should be noted that it is clearly indicated that the entire sentence has not been quoted.

The committee feels that the concluding part of the sentence would alter our opinion of Lenin as stated in Appendix B. The complete sentence is: 'And here we come to that question of the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism, upon which Engels touched in his discussion cited above on the incorrectness of the name Social Democrat.' Here Lenin refers to Engels touching upon the difference between Socialism and Communism. Previously in the book *State and Revolution*, Lenin quotes from an edition on Engels's articles of the seventies, entitled, *Internationales aus dem Volksstaat*, published January 3, 1894. The quotation is as follows: 'For Marx and me (Engels continues) it was, therefore, quite impossible to use such an elastic term to describe our particular point of view. At the present time things are different, and this word (Social Democrat) may, perhaps, pass muster, although it remains inexact (unpassend, literally "unsuitable") for a party whose economic program is not simply a general Socialist one, but definitely Communist—for a party whose final aim is the suppression of the whole state, and, therefore, also of democracy. But the names of *real* (the italics are Engels's) political parties never completely correspond with fact: the party develops, the name remains.'

"If we assume this to be a correct translation and the paragraph quoted is not in conflict with the rest of the articles written by Engels in this book then the blame of using the term Socialism and Communism to distinguish two phases would be that of Engels and consequently Lenin would be free of the accusation

of surreptitiously injecting premises.

"We recommend that the Section send this report to the Sub-Committee that they may check up on this matter and report back to the Section.

(Signed)

"Robert Fraser

"Clayton O'Donohue

"John Vonica

"Committee."

The reply of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee follows:

"March 14, 1940

"Section Wayne County,

"Socialist Labor Party,

"James Sim, Organizer, etc.

"Dear Comrades:

"The N.E.C. Sub-Committee has had presented to it the criticism of Section Wayne County with respect to a passage in Appendix B of the Party pamphlet, 'Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace,' relating to the terms 'Socialism' and 'Communism' and the improper juggling with these terms by the Russian Bolsheviks, beginning with Lenin, and emphasized by the Stalinists. Section Wayne County contends, in effect, that the Party errs in imputing this distortion of Marxism to Lenin and his successors—that it was Frederick Engels who was guilty of doing this, and that Lenin merely followed the example of Engels in claiming a distinction between 'Socialism' and 'Communism,' etc. The implication of the Section's criticism further seems to be that Lenin (in the passage partly quoted in 'Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace') had cited authority for his imputing to Engels the making of such a distinction, and

that by not quoting Lenin in full the citation of said authority by Lenin had been suppressed, or withheld from the reader, and that if the authority cited by Lenin had not been 'suppressed' in the S.L.P. pamphlet 'Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace,' the 'fact' would have been disclosed that, as stated, Engels and not Lenin was the real 'culprit.' There are several important questions involved here which we shall deal with *seriatim*. But before doing so we wish to record our understanding that Section Wayne County does not dispute the *logic* of the Party's contention as made in the passage criticized, or earlier in the report to the 1936 National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party, which, in effect, then would seem to imply that Section Wayne County visualizes a serious difference of opinion between Marx and Engels, with the latter dissenting from the views expressed by Marx in 'The Gotha Program,' and holding to the view that 'Socialism' and 'Communism' represent two separate future social stages. Having noted this point here, we shall dismiss it for the present, though we shall return to it later.

"1. Section Wayne County quotes the first part of Lenin's statement as reproduced in 'Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace,' to wit: 'And here we come to that question of the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism....' and completes the quotation—'upon which Engels touched in his discussion cited above on the incorrectness of the name Social Democrat.' [1] The question which concerns us here is: Did Engels 'touch upon' any such 'scientific difference'; if so, to what extent, and in what connection? Let us turn to



the passage from Engels quoted by Lenin on page 83 of 'State and Revolution,' British edition published October, 1919. We quote it here:

'For Marx and for me [Engels continued], it was, therefore, quite impossible to use such an elastic term to describe our particular point of view. At the present time things are different, and this word ("Social-Democrat") may, perhaps, pass muster, although it remains inexact (*unpassend*, literally "unsuitable") for a party whose economic programme is not simply a general Socialist one, but definitely Communist—for a party whose final political aim is the supersession of the whole State and, therefore, also of Democracy. But the names of *real* (the italics are Engels's) political parties never completely correspond with fact: the party develops; the name remains.' [2]

"Does Section Wayne County contend that Engels is here 'touching upon' any 'scientific difference between Socialism and Communism'? We search in vain for any such difference, scientific or otherwise, 'touched upon' or otherwise, by Frederick Engels. If we read the passages preceding the above quotation, beginning with the chapter-head '6. Engels on Supersession of Democracy,' we find that the subject, allegedly, is the 'scientific' incorrectness of the term 'Social Democrat'—surely an entirely different matter! Not once is there any indication that Engels was discussing 'Socialism' as the social stage allegedly preceding 'Communism,' nor do we find anything else which remotely justifies Lenin's use of this statement by En-

gels in support of his un-Marxian contentions with respect to Socialism being the lower stage of Communism, and so forth. Yet, Section Wayne County, apparently without question, uncritically, accepts Lenin's word for it that Engels had discussed this question, for we find that Section Wayne County says that 'Lenin refers to Engels touching upon the difference between Socialism and Communism,' while previously the Section, through its committee's report, had opined that the complete reproduction of Lenin's reference to the Engels quotation 'would alter our opinion of Lenin as stated in Appendix B.' And the Section makes this observation in complete awareness of the fact that the author of 'Appendix B' had shown with incontestable proof that Marx had never indulged in any such fantastic playing with terms as imputed to him (and Engels) by Lenin! In view of this, it is extraordinary, to say the least, that a Section of the Party should blindly follow Lenin in reading into a passage by Engels that which manifestly is not there!

"2. Apparently Engels did criticize the use of the term Social Democrat, saying that the term was '*unpassend*,' which does mean 'unsuitable,' and not 'inexact.' And why does Engels feel that that term is '*unpassend*'? Lenin himself gives the answer: Engels, he said, in all his articles 'used the word "Communist," not "Social Democrat" [Note carefully the term here imputed to Engels, 'Social Democrat,' not 'Socialist']; because at that time it was the Proudhonists in France and the Lassalleans in Germany who called themselves Social Democrats.'

"This certainly is clear, and un-

derstandable, and in no sense suggests that Engels is discussing 'the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism,' as falsely claimed by Lenin and by whoever induced Section Wayne County so to believe.

"What Engels apparently particularly objected to was the phrase 'Social Democracy,' because it connoted a sort of mongrel conception of scientific Socialism, or scientific Communism, if one prefers the latter. Having become enamored of the phrase 'democratic,' the Lassalleans had succeeded in foisting it upon the German movement (and its imitators everywhere), the members of which became known as 'Social Democrats' rather than Socialists, although the two phrases were on occasions used interchangeably. Marx sharply criticized the use of the word 'democratic' as proposed by the Lassalleans at Gotha in 1875. The Lassalleans had demanded 'the establishment of productive cooperative associations with state aid, under the democratic control of the working population.' [3] (Underscoring in original.) Said Marx:

'For... shame's sake the "state aid" is placed—under the democratic control of the "working population."

'First of all, "the working population" in Germany consists, in its majority, of peasants, and not of proletarians.

'Secondly, "democratic" in German means "rule of the people." But what is the meaning of 'the popular control of the working population'?' [4]

"And later Marx comments further:

'Even vulgar democracy, which

sees the millennium in the democratic republic and has no inkling of the fact that the class struggle is to be definitely fought out under this final form of State organization of capitalist society—even vulgar democracy stands mountain-high above that kind of democracy that keeps within the limits of what the police permit and logic forbids.' [5]

"In such scathing terms did Marx refer to this Lassalleian 'democracy.' And Engels, in a letter written to Bebel in March, 1875, declares, with obvious disgust that of 'the seven political demands,' advanced by the Lassalleans, 'there is not a single one that is not *bourgeois* democratic.' And in the same letter Engels, speaking of concessions made by the Marxists to the Lassalleans, exclaims: 'And all this has been done by our people to please the Lassalleans. And what has the other side conceded? That a crowd of rather confused *purely democratic demands* should figure in the programme....' (Underscoring by Engels.) [6]

"Is it any wonder, then, that Engels disliked the terms 'Social Democrat' and 'Social Democracy,' and that he only accepted them reluctantly, and until such time as more '*passend*' (suitable) terms might be adopted? But in this expressed dislike of terms which had an unsavory odor because of their association with the Lassalleian reformers and allies of Bismarck, there was not one reference to, nor thought of, any 'scientific difference between Socialism and Communism,' as falsely claimed by Lenin.

"3. But, someone will claim, there is that phrase imputed to Engels by



Lenin, viz., 'not simply a general Socialist one, but definitely Communist....' True, Engels does seem to make a distinction here, though one has to be pretty desperate in order to claim that even this constitutes a discussion of a 'scientific difference between Socialism and Communism.' But how is this phrase related to the general context? It is *immediately* related to Engels's criticism of the term 'Social-Democrat,' as a rereading of the passage by Engels will reveal. Not having the German text before us, we cannot verify the correctness of the translation into English—or rather, the translation from German into Russian into English. From the context it is perfectly clear, however, that even if this translation is correct, Engels had reference to the mongrel concept 'Social Democracy' (with all the petty bourgeois implications of that term) rather than to scientific Socialism—and it must be noted carefully that *Engels is referring to the economic programs of parties, and not to future social systems.* We are, therefore, fully justified in assuming that either the translation is faulty, or that Engels expressed himself with less care than usual. We would, then, further be fully justified in assuming that the passage should have read:

'....not simply a general Social Democratic one, but definitely Communist [i.e., Marxian Socialist]—....'

"In the 1888 preface to 'Communist Manifesto,' Frederick Engels indisputably establishes that in using the words 'Communist' and 'Socialist' he and Marx did so interchangeably. For the sake of clarity, the

relevant reference by Engels is reproduced here:

'Yet, when it was written, we could not have called it a *Socialist* Manifesto. By Socialists, in 1847, were understood, on the one hand, the adherents of the various Utopian systems: Owenites in England, Fourierists in France, both of them already reduced to the position of mere sects, and gradually dying out; on the other hand, the most multifarious social quacks, who, by all manners of tinkering, professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts of social grievances; in both cases men outside the working class movement and looking rather to the "educated" classes for support. Whatever portion of the working classes had become convinced of the insufficiency of mere political revolutions, and had proclaimed the necessity of a total social change, that portion, then, called itself Communist. It was a crude, rough-hewn, purely instinctive sort of Communism; still it touched the cardinal point and was powerful enough among the working class to produce the Utopian Communism, in France of Cabet, and in Germany of Weitling. Thus, Socialism was, in 1847, a middle class movement, Communism a working class movement. Socialism was, on the Continent at least, "respectable"; Communism was the very opposite. And as our notion, from the very beginning, was that "the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself," there could be no doubt as

to which of the two names we must take. Moreover, we have ever since been far from repudiating it.' [7]

"As the title for his adaptation of a larger work, Engels chose 'Socialism from Utopia to Science.' In other words, the word which in 1847 denoted utopianism, had come later to represent Marxian science—for what else could Engels have meant by the term 'science of Socialism'? And conceiving Socialism to be science in 1888 (and 'Socialism' being used by Engels deliberately as a substitute term for Communism), is there anyone bold enough to assert that six years later Engels would speak of 'Socialism' as something unscientific, and as something to be differentiated from (Marxian scientific) Communism?

"4. But, it may be argued, if the translation is correct, is it conceivable that Engels could have made such a mistake? Yes, it is conceivable, although we would hardly call it a mistake, but rather a 'lapsus calami' (a slip of the pen). We are all familiar with Engels's famous phrase: 'The State is not "abolished"—it dies out.' In his brilliant work, 'The Housing Question,' Engels says: 'They [the Blanquists] did not proclaim the "principles" of the Proudhonist plan of social salvation, but rather adopted, and almost literally at that, the views of German [i.e., Marxian] scientific Socialism on the necessity of the political action of the proletariat and of the dictatorship as the transitional stage to the abolition of classes and with them of the state....' (Underscoring ours.) The literalist will insist that Engels here contradicts his previously quoted

statement. For did not Engels say that the state is *not* abolished? And does he not here say that the state *is* abolished? Quoting (in a slightly different translation) the following part of this statement by Engels, viz.—

'....the necessity of political action by the proletariat and of the proletarian dictatorship as the transition towards the abolition of classes and, with them, of the state....'—

"Lenin sarcastically observed:

'Those addicted to hair-splitting criticism, or bourgeois "exterminators of Marxism," will perhaps discern a contradiction between this recognition of the "abolition of the state" and the repudiation of such a formula as anarchistic, in the passage from the "Anti-Duehring." It would not be surprising if the opportunists wrote down Engels, too, as an "Anarchist," for the social-chauvinists are now more and more adopting the fashion of accusing the Internationalists of being Anarchists.' [8]

"And so, *this* time, in the spirit of Lenin, we are quite justified in treating Engels's lapse (if the word 'Socialist' instead of 'Social-Democrat' is a lapse, and not a mistranslation) in the same manner in which Lenin treated Engels's 'contradiction' re abolishing and yet *not* abolishing the state!

"5. It is not necessary to review again Lenin's (and the Stalinist robots') distortion of Marx on the question of lower and higher Communism (or lower and advanced



stages of Socialism, which is the same thing), since that has been done in considerable detail by the S.L.P. already. The falsification, it will be recalled, consists in imputing to Marx a conception of the terms 'Socialism' and 'Communism' denoting two different meanings, and as representing two different social stages, the former representing the first stage immediately after the victory of the workers and the collapse of capitalism, the latter representing the higher stage. A simple quotation from Marx demolishes the contention immediately. In the 'Gotha Program' Marx says:

'But these shortcomings are unavoidable in the first phase of COMMUNIST SOCIETY, as it has just issued from capitalist society after long travail.' (Caps ours.) [9]

'Now, Lenin and the Stalinists claim that the something which emerges *immediately* out of capitalism is 'Socialism,' which in turn eventually is supposed to develop into 'Communism.' Yet Marx speaks of 'Communism' as emerging out of capitalism 'after long travail'! The 'from Socialism to Communism' humbug thus stands exposed as the fraud it is.

"In the light of all this, it seems incredible that an S.L.P. Section could find it possible to father this fraud on Frederick Engels, second only as a master-mind in the science of Socialism! Yet, if there is any point at all to the criticism of Section Wayne County, that is precisely what the Section has done. It is becoming rather monotonous to remind the Section that in making these criticisms and erroneous contentions

it is causing precious time to be consumed, seemingly without sufficient justification. This being the third or fourth of such criticisms, etc., all within the last year or two, the N.E.C. Sub-Committee is naturally curious to know how it happens that these should emanate from Section Wayne County with such seeming regularity. Since the whole Section collectively certainly does not suddenly spring these criticisms, etc., upon the Party, it would be interesting to learn something about their genesis—to find out just how they arise and reach the stage of committee deliberation, and eventual submission to the N.E.C. Sub-Committee. While it is noted that there was not unanimity with regard to all the points brought up, the fact remains that collectively the Section sponsored the submission of the criticism to the N.E.C. Sub-Committee, and as such we must recognize it. We know that the Section as a whole is not only loyal and devoted to the principles of the Party, but also that it, as a whole, is doing good work, and carrying on the Party's agitation in the Detroit area creditably. Yet, one cannot help reflecting on the still greater, and possibly still better, work that could be accomplished if these seemingly endless criticisms, and the detailed replies which they require, might be terminated.

"By instruction of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee,

(Signed) "Arnold Petersen,  
"National Secretary."

#### "References:

- [1] Lenin: 'State and Revolution,' B.S.P. & British S.L.P. edition, October 1919, pp. 100-101.
- [2] Ibid, p. 83.
- [3] Marx: 'The Gotha Program,' N.Y. Labor News edition 1922, p. 43.

- [4] Ibid., p. 44.
- [5] Ibid., p. 49.
- [6] Marx-Engels Correspondence, International Publishers, p. 336.
- [7] Marx and Engels: 'Communist Manifesto,' N.Y. Labor News edition, 1933, Preface, pp. 3-4.
- [8] Lenin: 'The Paris Commune,' International Publishers edition, 1931, p. 37.
- [9] Marx: 'The Gotha Program,' N.Y. Labor News edition, 1922, p. 31."

As stated, we are still awaiting the Section's official reaction, but it is hoped that the points brought out in the National Office letter will convince the Detroit comrades of their errors and misconceptions.

[Practically on the eve of the convention a letter was received from the Section in which, in effect, the contention is made that the Section as such was not submitting a criticism, but rather a request for information. In view of the evidence before us this is difficult to understand, but in justice to Section Wayne County this note of the Section's disclaimer is inserted here.]

Finally, the Section has recently submitted a criticism of the constitutional provisions governing the conduct of the study classes. As this matter properly belongs under the head of constitutional amendments, and will probably be reported on by the committee on constitution, etc., no comments will be offered here on that subject.

One cannot help reflecting, however, on this seemingly endless stream of criticism on more or less academic and theoretical subjects from a city whose size, importance and character would seem to call particularly for consideration of practical questions. Certainly our Detroit comrades should be left with little time for much else than such practical questions as, for instance,

how to secure the needed signatures to get on the ballot in Michigan, etc. Needless to say, the good faith and loyalty of our good Detroit comrades are not in question. We do believe, however, that the soundness of their judgment in these respects is very much in question. It is earnestly hoped that the airing of this situation at this convention, with such possible corrective action as may be conceived proper, and consistent with the Party's interests, will put an end to these many criticisms, objections, and over-much rumination on academic or theoretical subjects. Relevant criticism on important questions is not to be discouraged, but the criticism *must* be relevant, it *must* be factual and based at least on correct reading and understanding of the matter criticized. If every Section were to imitate the example of Section Wayne County, the National Office would have to close shop—or open a Marxian college for the study and consideration of such questions!

## The National and International Scene.

Frequently the life and death struggles in Europe and Asia are referred to as acts of madness. With particular reference to Hitler, the acts of Nazi Germany are called the results of a madman's dreams, the manifestations of a psychopathic case, the fruits of an insane and perverted individual, or of a group of individuals. Viewed generally—one is tempted to say philosophically!—the war is, of course, the result of madmen, as are practically all wars. But that, of course, explains nothing,



since the questions must then be asked: Why are these men insane, and, secondly, why do sane men permit madmen and psychopaths to plunge nations and the world into wars that threaten to destroy all civilization, and, specifically, to destroy the very stakes of war themselves? And we are then back again to the fundamental cause: capitalism.

Throughout its life-span, the capitalist system has had for partner the grim monster, War, partly because war itself is an industry, and the father of numerous subsidiary industries, and partly because a social system resting on force must, in the final analysis—that is, in a deadlock—seek solution through the arbitrament of arms. However much sentimentalists and pacifists may argue against war, under capitalism there is no escape from it. Capitalism fought its way to supremacy through brute force and wars; it consolidated its power everywhere through force or wars; it has maintained its supremacy through force and wars; and it is now seeking to save itself by a war, bloodier and more bitter than any previous war, and through a sort of “survival of the fittest” contest which in consequence is destroying all the contestants. Conflicts of opposing economic interests among capitalist nations, involving vital interests basic to the future or continued power of the opposing countries, can no more be settled peacefully, or by reason, than a pugilistic battle can be staged and settled by reason, or by taking a vote as to who shall be the winner and the new champion!

Lincoln, deploring the Civil War, once observed that after so and so

many battles have been fought, and after so and so many men had been killed, and so much wealth destroyed, the contestants will have to return to where they left off at the outbreak of hostilities, namely, back to the conference table, discussing the ways and means of resumed national (or international) intercourse. So long as there are competing capitalist groups in different nations, however, the seeds of new wars are sown at each so-called peace conference, and so decadent and worn out is the capitalist system, so impossible is it to make it function in accordance with its original principles and inner purpose, that peace conferences have become mere brief armistices, brief outbreaks of peace, one might say, in a world otherwise almost incessantly at war. From the premise of capitalism this is logical; from any other premise it is insanity and social suicide. Surely, that new social order, which eventually will and must emerge, may be said to have been born in bitter travail and anguish, in blood and tears, however peaceful may be the final transition. And countless thousands, who in a sane world would and could have rounded out their lives in peace and happiness, must yet suffer violent deaths in agony and horror, pathetically certifying through their deaths to the pitiful futility and the cruel monstrousness of a ruling class attempting to resuscitate and prolong a social system which in all respects except the final spasms is as dead and outworn and useless as is the feudal system.

One of the capitalist commentators, who sees things more clearly than the rest of his tribe, recently compared the present period with

the last days of the feudal era. Citing the fact that the National Association of Manufacturers has “summoned its members as warriors,” as he puts it, “to save the system of free enterprise” (meaning the capitalist robber system), he points out that the ruling class beneficiaries and supporters of feudalism likewise summoned the members of their class as warriors to save what they probably would have called the system of free and untrammelled sweating and fleecing of the serfs and peasants—had they found it necessary to resort to the hypocrisy and pretense of the bourgeoisie! He points out that the old feudal ruling class blamed everything for their troubles except the fact that feudalism was worn out and was being wrecked on the economic rock of the new social order, capitalism. Our commentator points out that the upholders of capitalism “will blame the government, the Bolsheviki, the New Dealers and all sorts of things,” but that “they will never blame the real culprit.” And he adds: “The culprit that is destroying free enterprise [capitalism] is business itself.” Precisely so. The thing that is destroying capitalism is capitalism itself—that is, functional capitalism. For the shell, the monstrously degraded spirit and form of capitalism, will persist until finally destroyed by the working class. Our commentator concludes his Jeremiad by saying: “All this has proceeded until the whole capitalist system has gotten itself tied into knots so that now it cannot move.”

And so the death struggle goes on, a struggle in which are destroyed millions of useful lives, untold wealth, and precious heirlooms

handed down from the past. And in that struggle is also being fast destroyed among millions upon millions the hope that, in this generation or the next, social relations may become other than the jungle tooth and claw struggle for a miserable existence. For as the million-mass of victims of the war contemplate the ghastly scene, and reflect upon the prospects or possible outcome, they must ask themselves: What earthly difference can it possibly make to us as exploited workers who wins this war? If Nazi Germany wins, will wage slavery be more or less palatable than it is now? Will it not be essentially the same round of toiling and moiling at a bare subsistence income that it was before the war? And if the Allied imperialists win the war, what will then be our reward? The best we can hope for under Allied wage slavery, as under Nazi slavery, is a bare subsistence wage in endless toil, even in the unlikely event that we secure and retain employment.

The answer, the *honest* answer, must be, of course, that for all their sacrifices, for all the blood they will have to shed, for all the agonies they will have suffered, the *best* the workers (who are the vast majority) can hope for is the restoration of the identical system of exploitation, of wage slavery, which produced—which *had* to produce—the very factors and circumstances which inescapably led to the war, and which, in the same premises, inevitably must lead to new wars, again and again, until life is reduced to a bare animal existence for all but a few, with not even hope left to sustain a wretched existence.

Viewing the situation soberly,



what would happen, for instance, if the war were to end tomorrow? There would be almost instantaneous universal collapse. Millions upon millions of workers, now engaged in armament industries, or in industries with a productivity intensified solely because of the war, would suddenly find their occupation gone. Given capitalism—good, old “free enterprise”—there would no longer be any need of their services. The number of the unemployed would suddenly be multiplied several times in all countries. Indeed, some countries that may have little or no unemployed today because of the war industries, would suddenly find themselves with millions of idle workers, no industrial equipment with which to supply jobs to the hungry millions, and no markets in which to dispose of the products even if the industrial equipment were available. As one plutocratic commentator correctly observes: “...the millions of men now under arms and at work in the armament industries cannot hope to return to their ordinary trades and occupations. For the jobs from which they have been mobilized no longer exist, and civilian jobs cannot now be restored until there has been restored security against war and confidence in the continuation of peace”—a security, as we have seen, which can no more be guaranteed under capitalism than security against yellow fever can be secured so long as the fever-breeding swamps are left undisturbed.

Thus this super-industry called modern war has produced an impasse: The million masses can only be kept employed if the war continues, and if the war continues beyond a year or two at the present

rate, capitalism and such civilization as we have will be completely destroyed, barring intercession of constructive working class revolution. Conversely, if the war ends before this destruction is encompassed, economic collapse confronts the capitalist class, while starvation and resultant diseases and deaths will be visited upon countless millions of workers—again barring intercession of constructive working class revolution. Economic ruin to the capitalist class, and horrible death on the battlefield, or in the air or on the seas, to the workers if the war continues. Economic ruin to the capitalist class, and death by starvation to the workers on the industrial battlefields, if the war ends. Barring Socialism, these are the prospects offered mankind by an insane social order finding itself hopelessly deadlocked.

To escape the consequences of capitalist political and economic bankruptcy, the capitalist class resorts to war. The war intensifies the causes, and multiplies the factors, that produce political and economic bankruptcy. It is an endless vicious circle, which can only be broken by a working class organized on revolutionary principles along Marxist-De Leonist lines. And seeing what marvels of technological feats are wrought by the workers in a destructive cause, what miracles may not be looked for when technology is at last turned to wholly socially constructive ends? As Marx so sagely observed: Nowhere is the theory that the organization of labor is determined by the means of production more brilliantly confirmed than in the human slaughter industry. In

the ghastly business of war there lies embedded at least that germ of constructive thought.

Given capitalism, then, war is inevitable, and the point must be made again and again until the truth of it has become part of the normal thinking of the million masses of workers. But, though inevitable from capitalist premises, we also know that the war need not have happened, and probably would not have happened, when or as it did, except for one loathsome fact: The monstrous crime committed by the Stalinists when they concluded the pact with Nazi Germany. As Marxists, with confidence in the power of the working class eventually to throw off the shackles of wage slavery, we certainly had reason to hope that if the war *had* been postponed another year or so, the workers in the various capitalist countries might meanwhile organize to put an end to the cause of modern wars (capitalism), and thereby render impossible all wars in the future. If a jungle beast kills a human being, we do not preach sermons to the beast nor denounce it as a murderer. It acted in accordance with its true nature. But if a human being kills another, consciously and with or without malice premeditation, we *do* denounce the slayer as a murderer, and hold him responsible before the bar of justice. But for the fact of Stalinist Russia entering into an alliance with the Nazi beast, the war most probably would not have broken out last September, and thousands upon thousands of useful workers, now rotting in dozens of battlefields and among charred ruins of populous centers, would still be alive, and (what is even more important) the opportu-

nity would still be present to avoid the horror of war, and its disastrous consequences, by the workers getting together to destroy the cause of war, capitalism.

In the light of all this, we are fully justified in placing the responsibility for the war on the lying and swindling Stalin, and the murderous, hypocritical gang surrounding him. They are murderers in a very real sense—murderers of working men, of working women and their children, murderers of their hopes and their fondest aspirations, murderers of the present possibilities that existed for turning this capitalist inferno into a Socialist Eden. And from that first crime, the Soviet-Nazi pact, the father crime, there has issued a brood of fearful crimes which forever will place the stamp of traitors and assassins on the Stalinists, and which forever will yoke Stalin with that foulest of modern monsters, the Beast of Berlin and Berchtesgaden. Dr. Karl J. Burckhardt, League of Nations High Commissioner, reports an interview he had with Hitler on August 11 last, and he tells us that at the end of the interview he accepted assurances from Hitler that the latter could, and presumably would, wait for a “reasonable solution” of the Danzig-Polish corridor problem. And Dr. Burckhardt concludes his report, saying that the opinion was held that “during the decisive fortnight which followed, those in the higher circles of the National Socialist [Nazi] regime lived in the conviction that, in view of the arrangement with the U.S.S.R. and after a rapid victory over Poland, the Western powers would not go so far as a general armed conflict. Such [adds Dr.



Burekhardt] was the opinion of Albert Foerster (Nazi district leader of Danzig)."

In other words, had it not been for Hitler's confidence of Allied acquiescence—a confidence inspired by assurances of Stalin's support, the Nazi Beast would not have dared to unleash the dogs of war. Thus, through the criminal treachery and corrupt double-dealing of the Stalinists, the two imperialist camps in Europe were tricked into war at the particular time it broke out, when both sides would at least have postponed so doing, with what definite development no one can know for certain, except that a breathing spell would have been gained, with possibilities that no Marxist needs apologize for visualizing and hoping for.

As a result of the crime of Stalinism the slaughter commenced, the Western capitalist powers realizing that they had to strike, or go down altogether, with the further consequence that neutral countries became potential battlefields, even as Stalinist Russia, by virtue of the pact, became a potential enemy at war with Great Britain and France, which possibility further led to the demands served on Finland by the Stalinist bandits, with the ghastly crime of the Finnish invasion by Stalinism—a crime now duplicated by the Nazi murderers in their invasion of powerless, helpless and therefore peaceful Scandinavian countries.

Yet, as we have shown by facts repeatedly, less than a year ago the Stalinists denounced the Nazi bandits as aggressors, and as enemies of peace, while hailing Great Britain and France as the peace-loving nations. A year ago the phrases "war-

mongers" and "incendiaries of war" in the mouths of the Stalinists had but one well understood meaning and application: These phrases were then without equivocation applied to the Nazis. Now the identical phrases, without anything having changed except Stalin's unprincipled change of front (a change having no relation to, nor justification in, Marxism) are applied to Great Britain and France, and as if these had always been so denounced by the Stalinists! On the First of May [1939], the Communist, or Third, International denounced certain imperialist elements within the Western capitalist countries for carrying on "the treacherous policy" of seeking "agreement with the fascist aggressors." Stalinism beat the imperialist elements in the race to pick the fruits of such a "treacherous policy" by effecting just such a criminal "agreement with the fascist aggressors." And each and every crime which the Western capitalist powers were accused of plotting (and probably did plot) was actually committed by the Stalinist criminal plotters themselves. By their hectic condemnation of the very things they themselves subsequently were guilty of, the Stalinists stand doubly condemned as criminal traitors and murderous allies of the most corrupt and loathsome enemy of Marxism and the working class today. From every viewpoint the Stalinists have earned the contempt and hatred of everything that is decent and honorable, of everything that is truly progressive and worthy the support of honest and honorable men and women.

Many examples have been given of the Stalinist treason and double

dealing. Scores more can be furnished, each testifying to the utter unscrupulousness, the base treason, the unprincipled opportunism and the revolting hypocrisy and duplicity of the Stalinists. Once more it must be reiterated that Joseph Stalin and the gangsters surrounding him are the bitterest foes of the workers of the world, the arch enemies of mankind and of the hopes of mankind. They are even below the Nazi bandits, and therefore deserving greater condemnation than the Nazis, for the same reason that the murderer is deserving of greater condemnation than the man-killing jungle beast.

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If for a moment we turn to the fascist countries we must ask ourselves: In view of the powerful working class organizations in these countries, in view of the millions of votes supposedly cast for Marxism, why are the brutal dictators able to do what they are doing? Where are the millions of Social Democratic voters, where are the millions of Communist voters, in Germany today? Where are these same millions of voters in all the other countries? The answer must be: They are where the Social Democratic and Communist reformers, swindlers and visionaries trained them to be. They are in the camp of the enemy, fighting for capitalist-imperialist principles, destroying the things they were supposed to have built. If there are exceptions (and there must be) their numbers are so small that they cannot even feebly articulate. The vast bulk of these "proud" armies of "Socialism" are where the Socialist Labor Party decades ago said they would inevitably land if the warning of the Socialist Labor Party were

not heeded, and if the principles and program presented by the S.L.P. were persistently ignored and disregarded by the so-called Marxist leaders. For he who urges revolution, or posits a revolutionary Marxist program, and thereupon builds a reform movement to the accompaniment of capitalist economics, and bourgeois reform politics, *inescapably* builds for the reaction.

Capitalist economics, and capitalist reform politics, by whomsoever advanced, and under whatever name, fatedly lead to the strengthening of the State, and therefore to the consolidating of that ever smaller, but ever more powerful group, the plutocratic imperialists, which eventually become identified completely with the capitalist State as the "ideal capitalist." The fires of revolution, kindled in the hearts and minds of the workers, become the flames consuming the revolutionary hopes of the proletariat, these flames now feeding on the disillusionment, the wrecked hopes, and on that utter sense of futility which seize the workers when they discover that the reforms they hailed as the gold of economic freedom turn out to be the base alloy of intensified economic slavery. Disillusionment of a revolutionary class supplies the soil in which grow despotism and dictators. History is eloquent upon the point. Yet, despite the lessons of the past and present, the fatuous reformers, under the same fraudulent designation of "Socialism" and "Marxism," are here in the United States pursuing the same tactics, straining for the same ends, which so fatedly led to disaster and ruin to the working class movements in Europe, and which have resulted in the estab-



lishment of the most brutal dictatorships in history, and in the most horrible of all wars of all times. Despite these lessons, despite the warnings of the Socialist Labor Party, despite the fact that our forecasts have been so horribly realized, these reformers and misleaders of the workers continue to sneer at the S.L.P. as if *their* fatuous hopes in the German Social Democracy, *their* blind faith in Stalinist Russia, *their* naive expectations of Scandinavian cooperatives, etc., had been justified and confirmed, instead of having been utterly blasted and destroyed by the inexorable logic of events.

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With one country after another being drawn into the maelstrom of war, the United States is drifting closer and closer to it. The trend has become particularly marked since the Nazi invasion of Denmark and Norway. President Roosevelt has repeatedly made clear that this country's fate is tied to that of the Western imperialist allies, and his famous Chicago speech in October, 1937 (then so jubilantly hailed by the Stalinists), was but the first in the series of steps since taken, which now apparently have led him to the brink of war. A year ago he openly warned the Nazis that if they started a war they would "from the outset involve the destinies of a nation [the United States] which... is potentially far stronger than Germany and Italy united." At a White House press conference a year ago, Mr. Roosevelt is reported to have agreed that if war broke out between Germany and the Western powers (Great Britain and France) the entry into the war by the United States would be a "virtual certainty."

In his recent address to the Pan-American Union, Mr. Roosevelt again made it abundantly clear that he regarded America's entry into the war as a "virtual certainty." Referring to the nations of the three Americas, he warned the Nazi-Fascist powers that "whoever touches anyone of us touches all of us." And threatening to meet "force with force," and protesting that "all of this is not of mere academic interest" (war is, indeed, no matter of academic interest!), he summed up: "I pray God that we shall not have to do more than that [i.e., the plans worked out at Panama]: *but should it be necessary, I am convinced that we should be wholly successful.*"

These are ominous words. And why is Mr. Roosevelt so pointed and deliberate in his repeated suggestions that the United States may join the slaughter? There seem to be two valid reasons: The Nazi conquest of Scandinavia has closed to American capitalists an export market registering at a figure of approximately \$200,000,000 in 1939, and fast increasing in volume. Also, there are at stake imports of nearly \$90,000,000. Secondly, the conquest of Norway renders Great Britain particularly vulnerable to Nazi air attacks, apart from the shutting off of foodstuffs heretofore exported by Denmark and Norway to Great Britain. If the Nazi bandits retain their hold on Norway, the chances of Allied victory, without the active participation of the United States, have become measurably reduced. And American capitalism wants Franco-British imperialism to win the war. And so does Mr. Roosevelt. Thus the prospects of the United States remaining neutral,

and nominally, at least, at peace, are rapidly vanishing. And if words and gestures mean anything, the plunging of the United States into the bloody, criminally senseless conflict seems to be but a matter of a short time. Once again the youth of America will be expected to defend capitalist trade interests, here or abroad, and fight the battles of Western imperialist capitalism. Once again they will be exhorted to slaughter and to be slaughtered, in order that the system of the du Ponts, Morgan, Ford, Rockefellers and the rest of the financial and industrial kings and barons may be made safe for them and their class interests, and their "heirs and assigns forevermore," as the legal phrase runs. Once more they will be instructed to shoulder arms in defense of the capitalist robber system—to lay down their lives for dear, old "free enterprise"!

If there be Americans who have misunderstood the intent and purport of Mr. Roosevelt's address to the Pan-American Union, neither the Nazi bandits nor their Western imperialist foes have done so. The Nazis, in characteristic gangster fashion, have told Mr. Roosevelt to mind his own "verdammt" business, reminding him that the skirts of American capitalism are none too clean either. There was that little Panama affair under the first Roosevelt, who boasted of his brazen violation of the sovereignty of another American republic. And there were those little trips to Nicaragua not so many years ago by the United States marines. And so forth. All of which obviously lends no legal or moral sanction to Nazi banditry. On the other hand, the Allied powers

hail Mr. Roosevelt's speech as "realistic," and a "fiercely contemptuous denunciation of Nazi policy and principles." Let us have no illusions on the score of American capitalist neutrality. There is neutrality and neutrality: There is one definition to the effect that a neutral is a small country too weak to defend itself. And there is the neutrality which Woodrow Wilson had in mind when, before plunging the United States into the first World War, he said that "the United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name." The latter is the kind of neutrality American capitalism is observing now: "in fact" and "in name." The "fact" is that our economic interests at present are tied up with traditional international capitalist interests as represented by British imperialism; the "name" is pro-Allied "neutrality"!

While a year ago our own Stalinist robots were all set to join the bandwagon of this pro-Allied "neutrality," the treacherous and villainous change of front by Stalinist Russia has completely upset the plans and programs of the petty American Machiavellians. Less than a year ago, one of the Charlie McCarthies, one Bittelman, told the Russians that Stalin's little errand boy, Browder, had "projected a line of guidance for the solution of a special question which was becoming mature." And what was this "special question" to which Browder had given this profound Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist analysis? Here it is—or, rather, there it was: "... the outcome of the 1940 elections will mark a crucial stage in the life of the nation which will affect decisively the



course of world events. ["Decisively," no less!] Very much is at stake in the coming battle. *It is whether the United States shall continue on the road of democracy and progress, collaborating with the democratic forces of other countries to resist and check the advance of fascism, or whether this country shall become the plaything of the pro-fascist monopolies, capitulating to and conniving with the fascist aggressors abroad?* (*World News and Views*, May 20, 1939.)

One short year ago! And how to put this "line" into practical effect? The same Stalinist spokesman tells us: "The presidential candidate, able to unite the democratic majority of the American people for victory over reaction in 1940, will have to be one who meets the approval of such progressive spokesmen as President Roosevelt, Mayor La Guardia and John L. Lewis, and the progressive forces in the American Federation of Labor. *Subsequent events [adds Bittelman] have again demonstrated that this is the road to victory over reaction.*"

But, alas, subsequent—"subsequent events" have now demonstrated that all this profound "Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist analysis" was pure tripe! For the road outlined less than a year ago as the road to victory over fascism is now discovered to be the road that leads to the victory of the war-mongering elements, who further are now identified as the imperialists of Great Britain, etc.! And Nazi Germany has now become the great promoter and apostle of peace!

Thus the poor Stalinist nitwits are left out on a limb, with the dire prospect of their Presidential candi-

date having to conduct his campaign from a filthy capitalist jail! If this happens, there is at least the consolation that Browder will have at his elbow, so to speak, that able lieutenant of Joe Stalin's pal Hitler, none other than the most honorable Fritz Kuhn! Fritz and "Oily," directing the destinies of the world from a capitalist hoosegow, along the latest line laid down by Joe and Adolf—truly, that were a sight for the gods!

There is, as we now know, no difference whatever in the policies and language of the Stalinists and the Nazis. They condemn the same things, they praise the same things, and they do so in language that is so alike that except for the source being given one could not tell if it came from Moscow or Berlin. The Nazi bandits applaud the invasion of Finland by the Stalinists, and justify it in their corrupt fashion; and the Stalinist gangsters applaud the invasion of Denmark and Norway by the Nazis, justifying it in their equally corrupt fashion. The Nazi press told us not long ago that the Stalinist invasion of Finland was provoked by British imperialism which allegedly was egging on the Finns. The Moscow paper, *Izvestia*, under a date-line of April 11, argued that "Germany had been forced to act in self-defense"!

As usual, the Stalinist robots are unable to keep up with the fast changing zig-zag line of Joe Stalin. Thus, on the very day that Norway declared war against Germany, the corrupt *Daily Worker* carried the following screaming front-page headlines:

"Norway Enraged at Invasion of Her Waters by Allied Fleet; Charges Plot to Spread the War."

That was the day the Nazis took over Oslo, with Great Britain pledging and rushing support to Norway!

And these political swindlers and partners of the criminal Nazis dare to speak in behalf of the American working class! With their record of unscrupulous opportunism, treachery and base betrayal of all that is sacred to the cause of Marxism, the fakers have the effrontery to pose as models of honesty, straightforwardness, intellectual integrity and moral rectitude! It seems unbelievable, for instance, that that faithful gramophone record of Stalin, the effervescent and ever fulminating Georgi Dimitroff, could have uttered these words:

"Treachery in policy has usually begun with revisionism in theory. Such was the case with the opportunists of the Second International. Such was the case with the Mensheviks. Such was the case with the Trotskyites, the Bukharinites the Zinovievites and the other enemies of the Party and of the working class."

It seems incredible that these swindlers could have the brass to utter such pious sentiments, but there they are, as recorded in *World News and Views* of January 20, 1940!

Parallel with the constant development of the Stalinists as liars and swindlers, and as Anti-Marxists, runs their development as clowns and simple-minded nitwits who, in their fantastic make-believe roles, discover a Marxian dialectic even in a sneeze by St. Joe Stalin. Thus, for example, it is reported that one Proskuriakov, in a report submitted

to the Communist Academy at Moscow, hailed Beethoven as a mobilizer and an arms-manufacturer to the Stalinists! This passage is vouched for as being genuine and authentic:

"One could hardly say that the musical concepts of Beethoven, of this Titan of bourgeois art in the ascending period of capitalism, have been hailed by our workers, our Kolkhoz peasants and our soldiers as an aid in our work of construction. We would exaggerate somewhat, comrades, if we maintained this. But after listening to any of his sonatas, the Kolkhoz peasant will guide his tractor with more conscious enthusiasm, the soldier will pursue with greater zeal his study of military theory, which will play a great role in future struggles. Beethoven mobilizes, Beethoven furnishes weapons, Beethoven represents an accompaniment to the incomparable melodies which we find in the books of Marx, of Engels, of Lenin, of Stalin."

Not satisfied with annexing Beethoven, the Stalinist wizards reach into the field of ornithology and snatch from out of the blue vault of heaven the bird about which Shelley rhapsodized so lyrically, the blithe lark, and claims it as the exclusive possession of Stalinism. Thus:

"The lark is exclusively a Soviet bird. The lark does not like the other countries, and lets its harmonious song be heard only over the fields made fertile by the collective labor of the citizens of the happy land of the Soviets."

And turning now to Shakespeare (who, according to Nazi opinion, is about to lose his British citizenship and become a Nazi national poet), we find that here, too, the Stalinists



alone have a true appreciation of his genius. "Hamlet," says a literary Stalinist journal, "could be a riddle for the bourgeoisie, but we have solved this riddle easily and completely"! No doubt by a profound Leninist-Stalinist-Browder analysis! And when one of the principal actors of the Dramatic Theater was asked about Shakespeare, this worthy cheerfully observed that "he is just learning German, so that he may soon be able to read Shakespeare in the original." What miracles that Soviet-Nazi pact has wrought! And we find the Nazi bandits proceeding in the precise manner and spirit, as for instance when Dr. Robert Ley of the Labor Front (he who recently, in the holy name of Hitler, called upon the world's workers to unite!) explained that war is really peace, and the shedding of blood a great blessing:

"War," said the incredible Dr. Ley (and it might be a Stalinist apologist speaking), "is not in contrast to peace, but simply another form of expression of the uninterrupted battle of nations and men...."!! (That is a comforting thought, and makes everything so clear and convincing!) And repeating the old formulas about peace drying up the manhood of nations, and about war being the regenerator, the Labor Front cuckoo (who is safely ensconced in the rear, far from the battlefield) concludes his uplifting remarks as follows:

"Therefore war is not the wrath of God, but a blessing of God."

Probably no one close enough to his ear has asked this swivel-chair hero to put this affirmation to the personal test!

Thus, as fit accompaniments to a criminally insane war, we find these criminal clowns and murderous morons chanting the praise of the scourge of man, and of the corrupter and destroyer of men's moral and intellectual integrity. If these fiends are right, then nature made a terrible blunder in letting the dinosaurian monsters perish. And if the Stalinists and the Nazis continue much longer along their present "cultural" and "educational" lines, we may soon witness the return of the Mesozoic reptiles—all body, ugly and huge, with brains (if any) the size of peas!

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Turning for a moment to that other fake outfit, the "Socialist party," we find that in no essential respect does it differ from the Stalinist gang. Less Machiavellian, perhaps, but in the main as unscrupulous and unprincipled; less brazen, perhaps, but the polish cannot hide the bogus character of the outfit. While accepting the label "Marxist," when bestowed on him, Norman Thomas is, of course, no more of a Marxist than is President Roosevelt. Sentimentally opposed to war, he claims every principle which logically would lead to war. While a few years ago Thomas, in a sudden spasm of Stalinism, decried reforms, insisting on Socialism or nothing, he now plans to travel with a complete sample case of reforms when he begins his Presidential tour! Tolerance is the keynote—tolerance, of what! Socialism, we are told, is Public Ownership—or, as the new twist has it, *Public Enterprise*! "Public Enterprise" is apparently intended as a negation of, and substitute for, the phrase, "private enterprise," but one

soon discovers that it is the same phony jewel in the head of the "ugly and venomous" toad of capitalism. This is the lucid official definition the S. P. politicians give us of "public enterprise," i.e., the S.P. conception of Socialism:

"Public ownership and operation of a business does not mean that it has to be completely centralized. It can be very much decentralized and it is even desirable that a substantial amount of competition be maintained among the various decentralized units of any industry organized by public enterprise."

Hokum and humbug multiplied a thousand times! Shades of Marx, Engels and De Leon! As the former right wing faction in the S.P. (the Oneal-Lee faction which seceded or was kicked out of the S.P. a few years ago)—as the organ of that faction said recently: "The party that was once honored by thinkers [!] like Debs, Hillquit, Berger, London, Hanford and Mailly is dead." True, the S.P. is dead, nor Caesar, but what may then be said of the even more putrid matter that a few years ago was eliminated—the Oneal-Lee excrescence?

The defeat of Hoan, of Milwaukee, both puts a period after an era of S.P. corruption, compromise and fusion, as well as advertises the bankruptcy of S.P.ism, so-called left-wing and right-wing alike. The "Milwaukee victory" of 1910 was heralded far and wide. Let the "Milwaukee defeat" be likewise heralded. In 1910 the "victory" was symbolized by a sun that looked as much like a setting as a rising sun. Let that same sun be now used to illustrate the defeat and bankruptcy of

S.P.ism, only this time no one need doubt that it actually represents definitely a setting sun!

It is most instructive to read the comments of the capitalist press on Hoan's defeat. (His defeat, incidentally, may in a special sense be regarded as a victory for Socialism, just as the election of Mayor Seidel thirty years ago was properly noted as a victory of capitalist principles and tactics.) The *Pittsburgh Press*, a typical capitalist paper, bemoans the defeat of Hoan, saying that "Milwaukee has voted out of office one of the greatest mayors....this country has ever had." This capitalist sheet observes that "Maybe the people just got tired of Dan Hoan and his good government...." Well, it is just possible that the workers of Milwaukee woke up to the fact that Hoan's government was indistinguishable from any previous capitalist government, and, since nothing had changed to affect, for the better, the wage slave status of the workers in Milwaukee, why not kick out the bloke, and see what this young barytone candidate can do? Perhaps the workers of Milwaukee said to Mr. Hoan: We don't like your voice anyhow. If we are going to be miserable, why not have a song and dance mayor?

The grief-stricken capitalist paper rhapsodizes about the cheap and efficient government that Hoan gave Milwaukee, saving the city (i.e., the capitalist taxpayers of Milwaukee) millions which formerly went into the pockets of old-line grafting politicians. And noting this with the natural joy of a capitalist spokesman, the paper said:

"If that be socialism, we could



use a lot of it. But Milwaukee is no more socialistic than other American cities; Socialist Hoan has applied, not Marxism, but honesty and skill and vision."

As to honesty, we do not doubt the mayor's personal honesty; as to "skill and vision," we make our reservations; but as to Hoan not applying Marxism, we answer full-throatedly: AYE!

As for the rest, we say that Hoan's Milwaukee capitalist administration certainly is *not* Socialism, any more than is that of Bridgeport, Connecticut; Reading, Pennsylvania, etc. On the contrary, the so-called Socialist administrations in these cities constitute overtures to fascism. S.P.-controlled cities were ever the hatcheries of the blackest reaction. Milwaukee will soon find out.

But as a symbol of S.P. "Socialism," Milwaukee has been, and will remain, a godsend to the Marxist. Milwaukee proves to the workers more convincingly the anti-Socialist character of the S.P. than the Marxian S.L.P. could hope to do with our present limited facilities!

The mention of Debs reminds one that in all essential respects Debs was thoroughly symbolic of the S. P.: He was a man of many and shifting opinions; he could blow hot and cold on Industrial Unionism, and could shout hallelujah for "Public Ownership" with the most ardent Hillquitite; he could weep salty tears, while pocketing handsome lecture fees, and gush the most sickening sentiment in a manner not to be outdone by a Norman Thomas. A characteristic example of this slaver-ing of sickening sentiment deserves to be recorded here. That Debs was

an actor was well known—he always played a part, and always before the galleries. Who but an actor, studying carefully the effect of each word, could be guilty of such cloying and nauseating expressions as these taken from a letter which Debs wrote to a fellow-member, David Karsner, his biographer, who included it in his Debs biography. (The "Horace" referred to was one Horace Traubel, supposedly literary executor of Walt Whitman, of whose writings he gave many cheap imitations and who apparently played Boswell to Walt Whitman's Dr. Johnson!) The extracts from Debs's letter follow:

"You [Karsner] are the very dearest, sweetest, finest of comrades. . . . Dear, beautiful, wonderful Horace! Put your arms around him and kiss him for me until I can do so myself. The Almighty never made but one of him. Tell him for me to cling to the willows and live—he cannot otherwise, for he is immortal."!!

It was no accident that Debs was the perennial standard-bearer of the corrupt, bogus, play-acting "Socialist party" of compromise, reform and sentimental utopianism. Like standard-bearer, so party, and vice versa!

No wonder capitalist interests hall the "Socialist party" and attempt to suppress the S.L.P. in one way or another. When Thomas was nominated for President, the capitalist press slobbered over in their enthusiasm. The New York *Times* (April 9, 1940) editorially acclaimed him, saying that the S.P. convention named him "because he is not only a good Socialist, but because he has

a pleasing personality and is highly respected by non-Socialists." And the *Times* adds: "He is as good a grasshopper as the party could put on its hook in angling for a possible 'protest vote.'"

"Grasshopper" isn't bad at all when we think about it!

The New York *World-Telegram*, reactionary to the core, said that Mr. Thomas (and his running mate) "are honest liberals," and gratefully acknowledges the fact that the "ideas of the Socialists [meaning the Thomas liberals] as to social and economic reforms have a way of turning up, after a few years, as planks in the major party platforms and as laws on the statute books."

Why, then, shouldn't the capitalist class be grateful to the Thomas "Socialists," seeing that they furnish planks with which to shore up the rotten and collapsing structure of capitalism—and even themselves boast of doing it?!

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In the background of the social stage there looms the sinister shadow of Ultramontanism, the chief defender of reaction, the source of its inspiration and its guide to action. It may only seem a shadow now, but let us not forget that behind such a shadow there is a formidable substance. It is reaching its long hands into all avenues of social and political life. It is adaptable. It is cruel, bloody and monstrous in Spain, conciliating in Italy, lying low in the Nazi realm, and suave, insinuating, crafty and designing, and active as hell's angels, in the United States! When the time, to it, seems ripe and propitious, it does not hesitate to show its hand. In Spain, under

Franco, it condones, if it does not promote and abet, anti-Semitism at its worst. A press despatch relayed via Santiago, Chile (March 22, 1940), reports that "Anti-Semitism Flares in Spain," the most repressive measures being taken to expel or crush the Jews. As a characteristic sample of this anti-Semitic campaign in Spain the despatch stated:

"A Jew who died several weeks ago was ordered buried in a dog cemetery in St. Andres, a Barcelona suburb, because the Jewish cemetery had been demolished by the authorities."

A pleasant prospect, indeed. The honest, but naive, supporters of Ultramontanism in this country insist that the church here is quite different, quite American, don't you know! Let us see how American the Ultramontane hierarchy can be in the United States. In a book entitled "Manual of Christian Doctrine," published as a "Course of Religious Instruction," by the "Brothers of the Christian Schools," and bearing the *imprimatur* of Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia and the *Nihil Obstat* of N. F. Fisher, S.T.L. (*Censor Librorum*) and Arthur J. Scanlan, S.T.D. (*Censor Deputatus*)—in this book that has gone through fifty-eight editions, we find a series of questions and answers that are most illuminating. Just a few can be cited here. To the question: "Why is the church superior to the state?" the answer is given: "Because the end to which the Church tends is the noblest of all ends." That settles that, like it or not! To the question: "What right has the Pope in virtue of this supremacy?" we get this answer: "The right to annul those



laws or acts of government that would injure the salvation of souls or attack the natural rights of citizens."

Let us not forget that the matter of determining what does or does not "injure the salvation of souls" and what constitutes "attack [on] the natural rights of citizens" is a wholly one-sided affair, the side being that of the Church, which makes the final determination to its own satisfaction!

Defining "Liberalism," the manual says: "It [Liberalism] is founded principally on the fact that modern society rests on liberty of conscience and of worship, on liberty of speech and of the press." And to the question: "Why is Liberalism to be condemned?" we are given these illuminating replies:

"1. Because it denies all subordination of the State to the Church; 2. Because it confounds liberty with right; 3. Because it despises the *social dominion* of Christ and rejects the benefits derived therefrom."

These, then, are authoritative statements by an important branch of the Church, and must necessarily represent the general views and policies of the Church. The record is clear and establishes that the Church acclaims and condemns the following things:

1. The Church is superior to the State.

2. The Pope has the right, in his wisdom or judgment, or the lack of these, to annul laws which citizens are required to obey.

3. Liberalism is condemned, hence that which "Liberalism" represents. Therefore—

4. Liberty of conscience and

worship are condemned.

5. Liberty of speech and of the press, likewise, are condemned.

6. The subordination of the State to the Church is reaffirmed.

7. "Liberty" and "right" apparently are incompatible.

8. Christ has a "social dominion," the meaning of which is not clear, unless it is an affirmation of the necessity or desirability of a theocratic form of government.

Here is a perfect program for a fascist State, for a social order of industrial feudalism. We are not surprised, then, when the Church comes out in favor of the guild system of the middle ages, nor does it surprise us when an outstanding churchman, such as Msgr. John A. Ryan, hails the defunct N.R.A. as an approach to the "ideal state." He compared the N.R.A. with the guild plan approved by the Church. The S.L.P. was first to point out the reactionary character of the N.R.A., that it lent itself perfectly to the requirement of the corporate or fascist State. We shall do well to follow closely the future action of the Church with regard to these successive steps leading to fascism, or industrial feudalism.

While one, perhaps, *should* be, one nevertheless is not, surprised to find so-called progressive or "Socialistic" labor leaders working hand in glove with the Ultramontane machine with regard to the ultimate enslavement of the workers—that is, their ultimate reduction to economic serfdom, if the Church has its way. At any rate, from the *Advance*, the official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, we learn that Sidney Hillman, General

President of the A.C.W.A., has been invited by the American hierarchy of the Catholic Church to join a Catholic Commission on American Citizenship. Mr. Hillman eagerly accepted the invitation, saying in part that "Labor can make a substantial contribution to a program of civic education, *as envisioned by the late Pontiff* . . . ."

If we assume that the Pope's "vision" of "civic education" is similar to the "civic education" taught hundreds of thousands of Catholics through the "Manual of Christian Doctrine," quoted before, we have a pretty good idea of the part the Church expects to play in the founding of the "new order" that it is striving to establish. That the Lewises, Hillmans and Schlossbergs (not to mention the Greens, et al.) should lend their support to such ultra-reactionary plans should give us food for thought. So should the close relationship existing between these labor lieutenants and the Thomases, Browders, and so forth.

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Against this field of reaction—essentially one in social objectives, whatever be the varying plans or specific programs—stands the Socialist Labor Party, "like a rock," until its mission is accomplished, "alert and watchful, yielding nothing."

### National Campaign 1940.

In previous national campaigns the N.E.C. Sub-Committee usually issued a call for a National Campaign Fund, fixing the amount at which to aim, whereupon the National Convention formally endorsed

the action of the N.E.C. Sub-Committee. This campaign year, coinciding with the Golden Jubilee Anniversary of the Party, the N.E.C. at its session May, 1939, decided to issue a call for a Pre-Convention Campaign Fund of \$20,000, to be collected and turned in at the Golden Jubilee celebration April 27. For this reason the N.E.C. Sub-Committee found it undesirable to issue a call for the general Campaign Fund while pressure was being applied to the subdivisions to collect as much as they possibly could for the Pre-Convention Fund. Accordingly, the National Convention will be expected to issue the formal call for a National Campaign Fund, determining the amount and perhaps the manner in which this fund should be collected. It is suggested that a National Campaign Fund of \$200,000 be collected. This is twice the amount of the call issued in 1936.

Apart from the usual methods to be employed, including the circulation of National Campaign Fund lists, it is suggested that members and sympathizers be asked to donate so-and-so-many days' wages during the campaign—say, three days' wages—the returnable dates of these three days' wages contributions to be spaced evenly, as, for instance, a certain date in June, a certain date in August, and a certain date in October.

The California S.E.C. devised what seems to be a very efficient method for collecting the state's quota on the Pre-Convention (\$20,000) Fund. The S.E.C. had Golden Jubilee pledge cards printed, each denominated \$10, with provision on the card for the recording of amounts collected by the member, or



contributed by himself, toward the completion of the \$10 pledge. Adapting the plan of the California S.E.C., the point is that when a member takes a card he thereby pledges a minimum of \$10 to the National Campaign Fund (or whatever the denomination of each card is made), and it is then up to the individual member, as already mentioned, to collect or make up the amount as best he can. The Sections, of course, should be charged with the responsibility for these cards, which should be returned to the National Office with the amounts collected at regular intervals, and, in any case, all cards, whether accompanied with cash or not, should be returned to the National Office at the end of the campaign.

It is hoped that the convention will give this suggestion careful consideration, if it is found to be adaptable for National Campaign Fund collection purposes.

In a letter to our National Organizer, Comrade Quinn, a Detroit comrade, Charles Schwartz, made a suggestion which seems good. The idea is "to place a small savings bank in each comrade's home. Occasionally, if a comrade thinks that he has done nothing or very little as regards Party activity, he can always deposit loose change into his bank to compensate for his inactivity. However, this little coin receptacle will always welcome loose change also from one who is consistently active. The time is drawing near when all these little banks [endorsed by Section Wayne County] will be called in by the Section, money removed, banks soldered up and distributed to the comrades as heretofore. I made up fifty banks for the Section. These

are made from Pet milk cans. I use a glass cutter to make the slit where the coin is dropped into, paint 'em up and letter 'em 'Socialist Labor Party — 1940 National Campaign Fund,' and number each one. Also put up ten more of these banks for the Hungarian comrades. Now the Bulgarians have given me an order for twenty."

Obviously, this is a matter that would have to be handled locally, if at all practical. It is interesting to note that far-away Section Everett, Wash., quite independently conceived of the same idea, and developed it very much along the lines suggested by our Detroit comrade. All of which proves an important sociological point, which need not be gone into here!

If for some reason it should not be considered feasible or advisable to carry out the plan devised by our California comrades, it is suggested that cards and stamps be printed similar to those that were used for the Weekly People and National Organizer Fund "Voluntary Assessment." Since the National Organizer Fund "Voluntary Assessment" expires in May, and conditions being what they are, if this had not been a national campaign year, the members and sympathizers would probably have been asked either to continue the National Organizer Fund "Voluntary Assessment" another year, or to assume voluntarily the obligation of a Weekly People assessment for 1940-1941. If this suggestion should prove more acceptable, special cards and stamps would, of course, be printed denoting the purpose for which this voluntary assessment would be designed.

It is also suggested that the subdivisions, including the Federation Branches, be asked to arrange at least one picnic during the season for the benefit of the National Campaign Fund. In some states such picnics are called *state* picnics, to the success of which all the Sections in the state contribute. However this may be done, it is felt that through these picnics it is made comparatively easy to secure outside support for the boosting of the Campaign Fund. Some Sections insist that they cannot arrange picnics for one reason or another, but it is not conceivable that there is a Section which cannot then arrange some sort of a social which, if properly handled, is quite likely to yield considerable funds. It has even been shown that social affairs held in the private homes of comrades, using a birthday or family anniversary as an excuse, can yield \$50 or \$60 or more.

No mention is made here of the aid that may be secured through the Weekly People Clubs, for the reason that during national campaign years the Press Funds are invariably neglected, and if the Weekly People Clubs will continue to do what they can to raise funds for the Weekly People, they will be doing their full share in producing a successful campaign.

It is not assumed that all the possibilities for raising funds have been suggested here. It is hoped that out of the collective wisdom of the National Convention other revenue-producing ideas will be suggested. If the members go about this business with determination to make a success of it, it is confidently to be expected that we shall raise whatever the

amount may be that the convention fixes as the size of the Campaign Fund.

The National Office will, of course, do everything possible to publicize the campaign nationally, and every effort will be exerted to secure radio facilities, locally and nationally. To a large extent, however, it will devolve upon our membership in the various localities to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves locally for advertising and publicizing the Party's National Campaign, its candidates, its special campaign literature, etc., etc. Undoubtedly every Section will have a local campaign committee, which, of course, would include a local leaflet distribution committee. Where there are unemployed members, these should be drafted particularly for the purpose of distributing leaflets, at a nominal compensation, which, if necessary, should be paid for out of the National Campaign Fund. The members should be on the look-out for opportunities to present the Party's message, whether it be before groups of workers, or other intelligent citizens, or through ascertaining that a certain representative or candidate of another political party has been given radio facilities, and, if so ascertained, to make courteous but persistent efforts to secure similar facilities for the S. L. P. through the station, or stations, having extended such courtesies to other parties.

As an example of alertness and resourcefulness in securing publicity and possible financial returns to the Party, we mention again the plan for having the S. L. P. represented at the Iowa State Fair during the summer. Wherever such or similar publicity



can be secured, let us not hesitate to avail ourselves of it, provided it is within our means.

### Miscellaneous.

Several proposals for constitutional amendments, or changes in present Party procedure in particular respects, have been received. A series of such proposals and constitutional amendments were adopted by the Washington State Convention for submission to the National Convention. Since the proposals of the Washington State Convention were not clear to the National Secretary, an inquiry was directed to our Washington State Secretary, to which a subsequent reply was received. The correspondence is submitted herewith. It is not believed that the constitutional amendments proposed by the Washington S.E.C. are in the interest of the Party, for the reason that they are going back to methods and practises which had previously been discarded as inadequate, or not serving the best interests of the Organization.

A proposition has been received from Section Wayne County to amend the study class section of Article II, to wit, Section 47, clauses (f) and (h) of the National Constitution. It might perhaps be noted here that these provisions were adopted after careful study and consideration. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that such changes as proposed by Section Wayne County should not be made for light or purely local reasons, but that they should be considered rather from the standpoint of what best serves the

Party's interests as a whole, and from the point of view of affording all-round and general protection to the Organization. It might also be pointed out here that clause (h) which Section Wayne County desires to have stricken from the Constitution was proposed by the Section itself in 1938, with some minor changes by the N.E.C. The fact that Section Wayne County two years ago felt satisfied with the change then proposed and now wants to reject it, would seem to indicate that the Section has either not had sufficient experience, or has not fully thought out the difficulties which they seem to visualize.

Section Kings County has submitted a series of proposals, one or two of which would seem to require constitutional amendments. The suggestions are submitted herewith. No argument in support of these proposals accompanied them.

At the N.E.C. Sub-Committee meeting held April 11, 1940, a suggestion was made by an old veteran comrade to supply to aged and physically disabled members a paid-up membership card for life. The N.E.C. Sub-Committee felt that this was a question that should be given consideration by the Convention. As we understand it, the reason for the comrade making this proposal is that there are members who, either because of illness, or forgetfulness or pride, fail to make formal application for exemption stamps, with the result that sometimes such old members eventually have to be dropped for non-payment of dues. The argument is also made that under the present constitutional clause members must themselves make formal application for exemption stamps before

they are granted. The proposal is a radical departure from Party practises in the past, and deserves to be given careful consideration.

It has been the practise in the past to publish the Convention proceedings in full in the WEEKLY PEOPLE, including the voluminous reports of the National and Editorial Offices. It is not known or remembered when this practise was started. However, there is no constitutional provision making such publication mandatory. Since the proceedings of the N.E.C. Sessions, for good reasons, are never published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE (barring such sections as lend themselves to publication as articles, etc.), there seems to be no good reason why the entire convention proceedings, including the aforementioned reports, should be published in the Party's official organ. There appear, however, to be very good reasons why this should not be done. For one thing, there are invariably matters of purely internal Party concern (including disciplinary cases, etc.), which really ought not to be published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE; for another, there is the question of the tremendous amount of space consumed in publishing the voluminous reports. We suggest that the National Office be authorized to exercise its judgment with regard to the portions of the convention proceedings, and the reports of the National Officers, which should be published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE. There being, as stated, no constitutional provision involved, a mere motion or resolution extending such authority should be sufficient, if the Convention concurs in the views expressed here.

As has been the custom in the

past, the Editorial and National Offices have collaborated in preparing proposed Party Platforms and Resolutions for the consideration of the Convention committees. It should hardly be necessary to observe that the Convention, if it so chooses, may disregard entirely what is submitted and prepare what to the delegates may seem to be desirable and satisfactory. In the main, the Resolutions and one of the Platform drafts have been prepared by the Editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE. Printed copies of these documents have been made for the convenience of the delegates and the committees of the Convention. This might briefly be said in explanation of the reason for two Platforms being submitted: Our experience, particularly during the last eight or ten years, has been that the Platform adopted by the preceding National Convention soon was found to be out of date, since it referred to current events which, especially in this rapidly changing age, presently appeared to have an appearance of ancient history. While unquestionably a Platform dealing with the issues and special moves made by the ruling class during the campaign is desirable, it is also felt that the Party should have a Platform which is "permanent," as nearly, of course, as such a thing is possible under capitalism. It is left to the Convention, of course, to decide whether or not two Platforms should be adopted, one to serve the immediate needs, and one the general purposes of a Platform during the next four years; or whether the two should be combined; or an entirely different Platform adopted.



## In Memoriam.

Death has again thinned our ranks during the last year. As though victims of the social storms raging, a full score of our comrades have fallen, "like leaves in wintry weather." Section Louisville, Ky., already hard beset, lost two members who were among the oldest and, in their days, the most active and loyal S.L.P. men, Ferdinand Zimmerer and Louis Fleischer. And also among the oldest S.L.P. veterans who did so much to advance our cause we note Fred Brown of Section Cleveland, O., Max Goltz, of Section Winona, Minn., C. F. Nielsen, of Section Seattle; and among those in middle life, who succumbed under the strain of a barbarous social system, we note with sorrow the passing of hard-working, genial Charles Clouse, of East St. Louis, Ill., and John Farkas, Sr., of the Akron Hungarian Branch, and Richard Ottem of Section Seattle, Wash., the latter a delegate to the 1936 National Convention. Gone also, in their best years, are those lovable and active S.L.P. women, Mae Nagle of Altoona, Pa., Margaret Braun of Cleveland, O., and Leah Epstein of Brooklyn, N.Y. And others less well known, or who had withdrawn from the Party under the stress of a weary life, but who yet remained loyal to the S.L.P. principles to the end. We hail them all for their loyalty, and we remain grateful debtors to them for the comradeship they gave us.

Looking back over the four years, the list of those who "crossed the bar" awakens sad memories, and yet memories tinged with pride and gratitude that this gallant band was

once with and of us, and mindful that, though gone, their contributions to the Party make them forever present and visible parts of ourselves and the S.L.P. There were faithful and hard-working John Eaton of Newark, N.J.; ever optimistic and cheerful Sol Levine of Brooklyn, N.Y.; gentle, urbane and witty George Ohls of Pittsburgh, Pa.; and fighting Fred Hanson of Boston, Mass. There was the indefatigable, ultra-self-sacrificing Ed. McCormick of New York, and that brave, wise and deeply devoted Bulgarian comrade, S. S. Saralieff, Editor of our Bulgarian organ, *Rabotnicheska Prosveta*. And though far away from us, yet as close in spirit and fraternal fellowship as the others, we miss with sadness that intrepid revolutionist of the antipodes, Alfred Wilson of Adelaide, Australia. And last, but, to so many of us, with most poignant and personal sorrow, we note the passing of Alfred C. Kihn and Adolph Orange, both of whom were so much a part of the S.L.P. that the vacancies left in the ranks by their going seem never to have been filled. Both were so typical and through and through S.L.P. men, and both having been intimately associated with Daniel De Leon, their names will be mentioned with that of De Leon in enduring remembrance.

All these loyal soldiers of the Proletarian Revolution we salute, and those others unnamed, who, could they but speak, would say—

"There midst the world new builded  
shall our earthly deeds abide,  
"Though our names be all forgotten,  
and the tale of how we died."

## Conclusion.

There were many among these departed ones who might well have lived long enough to have shared with us the pride and the joy we take in celebrating the glorious half-century of the founding of the Party, to whose successful labors and present soundness they contributed so mightily. If there is an added regret in their passing from this scene of toil and trouble, it is just this, that they could not have rounded out with us the fifty years of S.L.P. history which we are commemorating. And since this National Convention is not just the termination of a four-year period, but, above all, the climax of fifty fruitful and memorable years, it is altogether right that we should pause for a few more brief moments to reflect in wholesome reverence on those great figures of the past, Daniel De Leon and Henry Kuhn, and also—though not without some bitterness—on that very early figure and S.L.P. fighter, Lucien Sanial, who, though much older than De Leon, survived him by a number of years. Indeed, Lucien Sanial must have been nearly 100 years old when he died. As he told the present National Secretary of the S.L.P., he came here in the sixties from France where he had been an ardent disciple of Le Comte, whose "Positive Philosophy" had caught his fancy. Arriving in the United States, he soon dropped that and embraced Marxism of which he became an able and eloquent exponent, despite a strong French accent which remained with him to the end. It was Sanial who wrote the Socialist Labor Party national platform of 1889, the platform which, with little or no changes,

was to serve as the Party's declaration of principles and aims until the 1904 National Convention. In a letter to the present National Secretary, dated December 13, 1916, Sanial wrote: "If you can send me a copy, printed or typewritten, of the S.L.P.'s platform of 1900 (which was still exactly as I had drafted it at Chicago on October 1889), you would greatly oblige me."

De Leon used to refer to Sanial in terms of pity and regret—pity that his failing eyesight made it almost impossible for him to do the literary and research work which he loved so well; regret that his vanity (and jealousy of the vastly superior De Leon) betrayed him into deserting the Party and the cause which he hitherto had served so ably and so brilliantly. Sanial was almost blind at the time the present National Secretary of the S.L.P. met him, as is attested in this letter written (to Arnold Petersen) November 3, 1916: "Were it not that I am more and more tightly a prisoner of my eyes, I would have ventured out on several occasions during the campaign."

Hope was entertained by some S. L.P. members at that time that Sanial might be induced to acknowledge his mistakes, and rejoin the S.L.P., but that was expecting too much of a man who (however keen-minded even then) was approaching, if he had not already passed, his ninetieth year. Among those who were optimistic on the score of reclaiming Sanial was our veteran Comrade Charles Corregan, of Syracuse, whose absence (due to age) from these Golden Jubilee exercises has been noted with deep regret. In November, 1916, Comrade Corregan wrote your present National Secre-



tary a letter, enclosing another letter addressed to Sanial by Corregan, in which Corregan expressed the hope that his letter might "aid in healing an old sore," and that even if Sanial did not reply, "we have given," said Corregan, "Sanial a chance to retrieve himself in some measure." Sanial never replied and soon thereafter relations with him were again broken, and this time forever.

Comrade Corregan's letter, however, is a gem of forbearance, of reverence for De Leon's memory, and of almost classic beauty in style and expression, and may well serve as a footnote to the Golden Jubilee celebration and the proceedings of this Convention at this point. It follows:

"Syracuse, Nov. 20th, 1916.

"Lucien Sanial,

"Old Comrade (for were we not once aligned on the same battle-front?).

"Section New York, S.L.P., on December 14th will inaugurate an annual commemoration of the services of Daniel De Leon, that being his natal day. Will not you, so long and intimately associated with him, lay a tribute on his bier?

"Nothing, I believe, would tend more to rehabilitate you in the esteem of those who revere his memory than such a kindly act on your part. In the course of his long service in the movement he came to the parting of ways with many, but in the three years in which I was associated with him at the Party plant, yours was the only disaffection for which I heard him express regret and which seemed to grieve him much. Ambition, enmity, deceit and envy had led others away, but he always attrib-

uted your estrangement to the wiles and misrepresentations of others. While the shafts of malice and rancor fall harmless now on the sward that covers the dead, shall misunderstanding still rankle in the heart of the living and keep asunder forever two names which should be linked together in grateful remembrance in the breast of every American worker?

"As your physical infirmities will probably preclude your presence at the commemoration, and if you decide to act on this suggestion, please forward your tribute to our National Secretary, Mr. Petersen, that it may be read and become a part in the institution of this annual commemoration.

"Fraternally yours,

(Signed) "Charles H. Corregan."

Of different caliber was that iron soldier of the revolution, Henry Kuhn. Henry Kuhn was a staunch De Leonist, and though a prolific writer on subjects directly relating to Party activities and controversies, he wrote little on the general topics of Socialism except during the last eight or ten years of his life. That is a pity, since this fact renders it difficult to limn a portrait of him that will convey anything very visual to those who did not know him personally. We who knew him cherish the memory of a keen thinker, a logical contender, and a brave and truly great personality, kindly and humorous with it all.

But the towering personality whose genius shines with a lustre which the years have only made brighter, is, of course, Daniel De Leon. Were he with us today, since he never

doubted that the Socialist Labor Party would survive all its enemies and emerge triumphantly in the end, he would not be surprised to find the Party carrying on more vigorously than ever, but we may be sure that it would have warmed his heart could he have witnessed these Golden Jubilee celebrations and this Convention. All-embracing, all-pervading, De Leon's genius has endowed the Socialist Labor Party with a vitality that cannot and will not lessen while tongues and pens are needed to give expression to the great principle and program with which De Leon's name is inseparably associated. De Leon possessed the capacity invariably associated with genius for so sinking himself into, and of so identifying himself with, the task to which he had dedicated himself, as to cause subject and self to fuse into one. He was, to borrow the words of the late Justice Cardozo, capable of complete "submergence of self in the pursuit of an ideal," he possessed "the readiness to spend [himself] (one's self) without measure, prodigally, almost ecstatically, for something intuitively apprehended as great and noble." He burned with a flame so fierce and bright that he scorched the ambitious, self-seeking and jealous mediocrities around him. The flame of his genius they mistook for the same smouldering hatred which burned in their bosoms, and judging him by their low standards, they denounced him for being the very things they were themselves, but which, indeed, he was not. In the cool recesses of his crystal mind he appraised them, found them wanting, and rejected them and their false, petty schemes, their ambitions and their corrupt or simply erroneous

theories. And out of the hatred, which his moral rectitude and his intellectual integrity created, have grown the legends which to this day cluster around his name in the enemy's camp—legends which are seized upon ready-made by every whippersnapper reformer who conceives himself qualified to speak or write on the social question, and each such upstart adds *his* deposit of slander and misconceptions. Being incapable of comprehending him, being unable to refute him, finding themselves in a blind alley of absurdities and futilities, or cornered like rats, they seek to hide their rage in the wrinkle of a sneer. It was Goethe who said:

"Contemporaries are too easily mistaken in their appraisal of the great men of their day: their extraordinary qualities irritate them; their logical and useful lives distort their views, prevent fair estimates and acknowledgment of their achievements. But dust, fog and clouds disappear, they settle down and then we see the vista before our eyes, clear and distinct; we see light and shade, we examine the achievements of these great men, with a spirit calm, as we are in the habit of gazing upon the glorious orb of the full moon on a clear summer night."

A man of principle, De Leon judged others by the standards of principles. Accepting his own fate philosophically, he was impatient with the unprincipled, short-sighted and self-centered dwarfs who wanted to get "something now," and who demanded visible proof at every turn in the difficult road that *this* was the last turn. However calm and philosophical normally, he could be



aroused to anger when these petty creatures answered his winged arrows of truths with spitballs of venom, malice and slander. In their lack of principles they illustrated Lowell's lines, which fit them as if they were addressed to them:

"A merciful Providence fashioned  
us hollow

On purpose that we might our  
principles swallow."

Out of the shadows of the past there emerges this great figure -- lovable, human and humane, erring, no doubt, in smaller things, but everlastingly right in all the things that mattered. No dust needs to be brushed off this giant figure of a man, despite the fifty years that have elapsed since he appeared as the incomparable champion of the proletariat, nor yet since he passed from the scene of his struggles and achievements. We who know him and understand him see him whole and, seeing him, feel re-inspired to pursue the great objectives to which he and those who fought with him gave of themselves in fullest measure. They did not recognize, nor do we recognize, defeats in the real sense of that word, for what men call defeats in a great cause are defeats neither to the cause nor to its battle-scarred defenders, but to those *served* by the cause, some of whom, unfortunately, too often are the blind tools of their oppressors. "No matter how often defeated," Emerson reminds us, "you are born to victory. The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it."

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And thus from the summit of the half-century of labor and achievements the S.L.P. surveys the field,

and girds itself for renewed battle. The European war, more and more assuming the proportions of a universal war, proves to the hilt every major contention made by the Party during these fifty years. We are more certain than ever (if that were possible) that sanity and order and peace can only be established in this world through the organized efforts of the working class, and of that working class it is peculiarly the American workers who are called upon by social evolution to take the lead. Social evolution has so wrought as to make it within the power of the working class *and the working class alone*, to create the basis for an enduring peace. It is within its reach to grasp the magic wand wherewith to bring forth the reign of economic, social and true individual liberty, abundance and peace for all, for all climes and all times. If the working class fails, humanity fails. Vain would then have been the agony and suffering throughout the ages, meaningless the upward climb of the race, futile its thousand years of straining to rise permanently above the level of the brute and the brute's savage and circumscribed struggle to survive. But the working class will not, cannot fail. It will not turn down the opportunity to conquer, now, liberty with peace and plenty; it will not accept the paltry bribe of "security" for contented and submissive slaves. The vulgar drill-sergeants in power today have repudiated, and are bent on destroying, all that life holds dear to civilized man. The working class alone, organized in line with the principles and program of the Socialist Labor Party, can rescue the rich heritage of the past for themselves and for that happier

posterity which some day will inhabit this earth. The usurpers have everything against them--everything except the present ignorance of the working class. The usurpers are strong only because the working class is weak, *and the working class is weak only because it is not organized.*

The Socialist Labor Party has fought hard and consistently during these fifty years to impart to the workers the secret of success. We cannot, we do not intend to, halt now. In ever increasing measure, with ever greater vigor, with convic-

tion stronger than ever that historical *right* eventually provides the *might* that will make of that right more than a sentimental catchword, we prepare ourselves for renewed battle this coming campaign, and whatever campaigns may follow.

Fraternally submitted,  
National Executive Committee,  
Socialist Labor Party,  
ARNOLD PETERSEN,  
National Secretary.

New York,  
March 24-April 22, 1940.

## THE REPORT OF THE EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY PEOPLE.

To the Delegates of the 1940  
National Convention of the S.L.P.:  
Greetings.

The most salient problems confronting the editorial department of the WEEKLY PEOPLE have already been dealt with thoroughly and comprehensively in the report of the National Secretary. These problems correspond to those of the Party itself and are pushed into the foreground by the terrific pace of world history. As the official printed spokesman of the Party, the WEEKLY PEOPLE, or, more specifically, the editorial department, is charged with interpreting these events, tracing them through all their intricate ramifications, exposing their interconnection and weaving into them the science of Marxism. It is a task which cannot be approached indifferently.

Once, perhaps, it was possible to take up each event deliberately, and

engage in a long period of silence between the event itself and the moment when one ventures to explain it and its significance. If one had doubts concerning the correctness of his interpretation he could take ample time in which to gain reassurance. Today doubts are a luxury we can no longer afford. The events of two weeks ago are buried under the avalanche of today's news.

To treat great domestic and international events today, therefore, requires more than that the editor and his staff be well grounded in De Leonism. This, and constant "refueling" from the works of De Leon, Marx and others are, of course, indispensable requirements. But it is also necessary that there be organization and efficiency in the editorial office developed to a much higher degree than was hitherto achieved. It is now necessary that research be made



without loss of precious time. This means, in addition to an alert staff, not only a large library and extensive files, but carefully indexed library and files. I am pleased to report that we are well on the way to achieving this desired efficiency, and that it promises to reduce still further the time interval between the actual occurrence of important events and the time when you may read a correct, well backgrounded, Marxian interpretation of them in the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

The healthy and proper relationship between the editorial department and the National Office makes it quite unnecessary to bring up in this report minor problems which have formerly come before National Conventions. I shall, therefore, confine this report to those questions which depend for their solution on the membership generally and the contributors to the WEEKLY PEOPLE specifically.

### *Building Up a "Staff."*

Before the National Executive Committee in session in New York, May 6, 1939, we expressed the vital importance of a "field staff" and our need for still more regular contributors. The character of the contributions required was described in that report and need not be repeated here except to emphasize that articles should be brief and timely and based on events instead of clichés. Happily this appeal has brought some results and we have had far fewer "crises" (i.e., weeks during which no copy arrives from the outside) than formerly. That these "crises" still recur is evidence of the need for more contributors and greater regu-

larly on the part of those who are already writing for the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

We are not only anxious to spur old contributors on but we also want to enlist new writers. Unfortunately we are not always able to use all the manuscript coming into the editorial office, and our rejection tends to discourage writers who show real ability. Moreover, pressure of work forbids our taking the time to write criticisms of manuscript rejected. Therefore, we take this opportunity to beg indulgence of those members of the "field staff" whose efforts have not been published and ask that they try again. We confess looking forward to the time when we can afford to be even more selective than now—that is, when we shall always have more manuscript than we can use and raise our standards generally, but for the present we would be content with a modicum of cooperation from the field.

Early this year I received a letter from a large mid-western Section advising that a class had been organized to teach the fundamentals of speaking and writing. I quote from the letter of the instructor:

"We studied and discussed outline at a few classes, also at one class discussed the points in the N.E.C. minutes of May, 1939 (How Not to Write). Then I gave an assignment, a paragraph from a book written by Gerald L. K. Smith, who became prominent in the back-to-work movement in the last Chrysler labor trouble.... In the future we will tackle various news events...."

Enclosed with the letter were several manuscripts dealing with the topic assigned. All were good. We selected one and it was published in

the WEEKLY PEOPLE, February 10.

I wish to propose to the convention that Sections be urged to incorporate a writers' course wherever there is a speakers' class and where it is otherwise feasible.

Such a course should not only endeavor to teach those who possess some writing ability how to write crisply and succinctly and to "weave the theory into the events of the day"; it should also teach what is just news or what is news worthy of treatment in the WEEKLY PEOPLE. Not long ago the following item appeared in the New York *World-Telegram*, bearing the caption, "Sorry, No Story":

"Our correspondent neglected to send us a story about the annual dinner of the Brookhaven Town Volunteer Firemen's Assn. in Patchogue, L.I., last night.

"When he was queried today as to why we hadn't received a story about the dinner he replied:

"Oh, there wasn't any story. They didn't get to finish the dinner. They had to interrupt it and run over to the Island Coal and Lumber Co. in Medford and help put out a fire."

I am afraid that many of our writers are like this correspondent. They do not recognize news when they see it. For example, last year there was a relief crisis in Ohio. We published some stories on it, but they were all prepared in the editorial office. It was an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the utter, callous cruelty of capitalism and the hypocrisy of both the Democrats and Republicans for whom relief is only a political football and we did the best we could with meager reports. Yet not a single writer on the scene seemed to

recognize the newsworthiness of the subject. Similar instances which illustrate this point are almost numberless and occur all over the country. We hope that with an enlarged "staff" this fault may be remedied.

We can all have a justifiable pride in the cartoons and drawings by our four capable S.L.P. artists. They reveal not only excellent craftsmanship but a keen grasp of the mission of satire. The reception accorded them gives us reason to plan their continued use even with greater frequency. On this point I should like to add that the cooperation of each of our artists has been 100 per cent. Not only do they contribute on their own initiative but whenever a request is made of them their response is prompt and wholehearted.

Our use of vignettes—little caricatures of prominent national and international figures—has also won considerable commendation. Aside from the fact that they break up the severity of solid type, they skilfully satirize those who are representative, in one way or another, of our foe. Nearly all our readers welcome their use and appreciate their dual mission. In contrast to this universal accord are two communications which express divergent views. One, attached as a postscript to a letter to the National Office, reads:

"I do not like to see the ugly faces of labor fakers or politician in the W.P. there are no Education arrived from it." (Sic)

While our article, "Satire—Weapon of Truth," effectively answers this critic, I should like to repeat here De Leon's summation of the mission of satire:

"Satire is a powerful weapon. No movement may throw the weapon



aside without injury to its arsenal. As satire has its strength in facts, otherwise concealed, that it brings home, only sound movements and thoughts can forge the weapon. It were folly to leave such a valuable weapon unused because of the lack of intelligence of some to appreciate it."

It might be argued, of course, that our vignettes do not fall in the category of satire. We hold that they do. The artist in exaggerating facial characteristics has subtly drawn a character portrait, not only of the man, but of the movement he personifies. Take, for example, the caricature of John L. Lewis. His fleshy jaw, small nose and heavy brows are emphasized in such a way as to subtly convey the idea of an English pug dog. Without intentionally slandering that canine breed, I submit that in its countenance are written ignorance and viciousness. How better can the labor faker, John L. Lewis, be described?

Another caricature is that of Hirohito. There he stands, in royal uniform, holding the sword of one of his less puny ancestors, trying desperately to look intelligent and failing miserably in this attempt.

This is satire, satire in one of its most subtle and effective forms.

As for the ugliness of the faces in our vignettes, I fear that Nature and not the artist of the WEEKLY PEOPLE must bear the onus.

The second criticism was a joint letter written by two comrades. The letter and my reply follow:

"June 28, 1939.

"Dear Comrade Hass:

"We are writing to say that we do not like the use of the small carica-

tures in the columns of the WEEKLY PEOPLE. We think these little pictures are clever, but that their place is not in the WEEKLY PEOPLE. The new reader of our paper, we believe, is likely to conclude that our movement attacks these men as individuals, whereas all our articles try to point out that the individual leader is but the creature of the economic system which breeds him.

"We are not objecting to cartoons or pictorial art in the WEEKLY PEOPLE but merely to the employment of the disembodied faces. We would enjoy seeing more of the type of cartoon which graced the front of the April 22nd issue.

"Hoping that you will see our point, we are," etc.

"June 29, 1939.

"Dear Comrades:

"I received your letter of June 28 criticizing the half-column caricatures we are now using in the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

"First, I should like to say they are not merely 'clever' little pictures. They are top-flight caricatures in which the artist has captured and exaggerated salient characteristics, even to the character, of his subjects.

"You make the point (your only point) that the new reader 'is likely to conclude that our movement attacks these men as individuals.' Somewhere (I haven't the time to look it up now) De Leon says in effect:

"The S.L.P. attacks movements, not men. But when men identify themselves so completely with movements as to personify them, then it becomes impossible to separate the

two. Then men fall under Socialism's blows.

"Could one even consider the Pope as an individual? Such an attitude is preposterous. Who is Lewis but the personification of the C.I.O.? And could you visualize Hitler as anything but the nominal head of a capitalist nation surrendered to barbarism?

"The position you express could be carried to very amusing extremes. For, if it is illogical to attack corrupt and venal creatures who personify false movements, then it is illogical to attack that abstract 'capitalist' who, to use your own argument, 'is the creature of the economic system which breeds him.' I do not mean to be facetious when I say that it might be carried to the extreme of apologizing each time we call a man a faker, a madman or a bandit.

"I could cite you a thousand instances when men like Marx, Engels, Lenin and De Leon attacked individuals with everything from a meat axe to razor-sharp satire, always, of course, *proving* the truth and justice of their attacks, as, I hope you will agree, we do.

"I hold that in the mortal combat with the enemy every honorable weapon should be used vigorously without any consideration for 'feelings.' Satire is one of our weapons and one we would be fools not to use.

"I do not agree that new readers find such caricatures objectionable. 'New readers,' if they are the kind we have any hope of keeping, could not possibly have such consideration for the Pope, Franco, Hitler, et al., as to be repelled by our caricatures. As for Roosevelt, Lewis, Green, et al., it is reasonable to believe that our new readers are suspicious of

them or at least not so completely 'sold' as to resent our satiric thrusts.

"Apart from this I hold these drawings break the severity of solid type without violating the restraint of our make-up, and they enliven the printed page.

"I, nevertheless, appreciate your writing me concerning your reactions. It goes without saying that if such reactions were general, we would dispense with the caricatures forthwith. They are not. On the contrary, with the exception of yourselves, all who have expressed themselves have expressed unqualified approval."

A few criticisms have been sent us which merit brief treatment here. A communication endorsed by Section Oakland raises three points which we herewith outline briefly:

1. The suggestion was made that we carry as a permanent feature a clear, simple and terse statement of the Party's aims and principles, in order that new readers might grasp these aims and principles without having to piece them together from various articles. We are in accord with this proposal and hope that, before this report is made, such a statement will have been written. If not, it will be due to pressure of other work. In this connection I have thought of initiating a "contest" among S.L.P. writers who would submit such a statement, but, to date, the idea has not jelled.

2. Section Oakland also proposed that we run footnotes to elucidate and define Marxian terms and phrases. To this proposal I replied:

"If we were to attempt to make definitions in footnotes, there would



be footnotes at the bottom of nearly every column, and if the definitions were to be satisfactory, they might even take up a half or three quarters of a column or more. Moreover, where are we to begin, and where are we to end? How simple must a Marxist term be to make it unnecessary to define in a footnote?

"I am afraid that this question of Marxist terminology is insoluble, and that, as is the case with every other science, scientific terms must be understood through study."

3. The third question raised was that of the use of foreign words and phrases. I replied to this criticism as follows:

"Few foreign words and phrases are used in the WEEKLY PEOPLE other than those which have been adopted into the English language, i.e., phrases like 'status quo,' or 'ex post facto,' etc. Wherever foreign phrases are used which are not in common usage, it is a practice of the WEEKLY PEOPLE to give a translation in parentheses."

In addition to these criticisms have come the perennial ones concerning the prodigiousness of some of the articles, obscure language, etc. Where extensive treatment is unnecessary, we are endeavoring to treat all subjects tersely. At the same time we recognize that where a thesis requires it, writers are justified in writing at length and we cannot see the wisdom of sacrificing thoroughness for the benefit of those who like their education in capsule form. As for obscure language, we are, as has been pointed out, striving to eliminate it and attain a greater simplicity in presentation.

You have all seen the Golden Jubilee publications, both the Magazine

and the WEEKLY PEOPLE. Co-operation from all the contributors to these publications has been all that could be desired, and accounts, in great part, for their quality. Co-operation also made it possible to maintain a schedule so that the publications were issued without friction. In addition to writers from America, Canada, Australia, England and Denmark, we are indebted to our "art staff" which has done so much to help us raise the standards of both the Magazine and the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

To many of you, who have your minds focused on the 1940 campaign, it may seem early to talk about the Golden Jubilee of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, to be published in 1941. Yet we, in the editorial office, are compelled to give thought to this important edition now, although we do not intend that it should divert us from the more important immediate problems in connection with the campaign. I mention it in order to convey to you a conception of the amount of work and planning which goes into special issues of the WEEKLY PEOPLE and our Magazine.

#### *Page Six.*

Page six of our regular six-page issue is devoted to official notices. Its importance can scarcely be exaggerated. And the headaches it causes the editorial office seems to be in proportion to its importance. We have tried to revamp it in such a way as to make it less of an "ugly duckling," but with little success. The tedious job of editing this page belongs to Comrade Wills. It is a job made all the more tedious by carelessness on the part of those who send in announcements. Because of

her familiarity with the problems page six occasions I have asked Comrade Wills to list the principal transgressions and explain the routine handling of announcements. Her report follows:

"Announcements are made ready for the linotype operator and passed on to him *when they come to the office*. He sets aside a little time during the day to get these set so that the day of going to press it is a matter of collecting them and getting them in their proper page position. Naturally both editorial assistant and linotype operator dismiss from their minds a routine announcement. However, when the time for getting the page ready comes, we often find duplicate announcements. This occurs because two people send in the same announcement or because a mere detail is to be added to an announcement—in the case of a lecture series, an additional date, speaker, etc.—and the whole announcement is carefully typed anew so that we consider it new. This is a complete waste of your time and ours. See that only one person sends in an announcement, and, when an addition only is made, indicate that clearly.

"Be sure to observe the warning at the head of the column 'Official': 'Always include place, date and time.' In fact, these and other absolute essentials should constitute your announcement. Avoid verbal flourishes. We have no room for them and they do not belong on page six. Save them for your local advertising.

"For several weeks we carried this warning: 'Organizers, Press Committees, Please Note: In wording your announcements for entertainments please keep in mind this regulation of the U.S. Post Office: "...and

no newspaper...containing any advertisement of any lottery, gift enterprise, or scheme of any kind offering prizes depending in whole or in part upon lot or chance....shall be carried in or carried by the mails of the United States or be delivered by any postmaster or letter carrier." A penalty of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment of no more than two years is threatened. Postal authorities have interpreted this provision to include card parties, bingo and bunco parties, etc.'

"Despite this warning in the WEEKLY PEOPLE and a form letter which we send to those who send in announcements that have to be reworded to be published, rarely does a week pass that the warning is not ignored—at times by some one who has already received one or two copies of the form letter. This is another time-waster that must be eliminated."

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We face a gruelling campaign and one which places greater demands on us than any in the past. What is going to make it even more difficult is the fact that most of the contributors to the WEEKLY PEOPLE are also active in other branches of Party work. Nevertheless, the importance of the WEEKLY PEOPLE is such that we feel justified in asking *more*, not less, cooperation.

It is our earnest desire constantly to improve the WEEKLY PEOPLE, and make of it such a dynamic publication as to *compel* the attention of that great and, as yet, amorphous mass of workers. The Socialist Labor Party has the correct and, therefore, compelling program. Yet we know that a light may burn with intense brightness and radiate its bril-



liance into a void unless, behind it, is a polished reflector so skilfully fashioned as to gather and bend the vagrant rays into one mighty refulgent beam. We regard the WEEKLY PEOPLE as an instrument which refracts and intensifies the radiant light cast into a world of darkness by the S.L.P. It must never, through negligence or lack of

zeal, be permitted to lose what reflecting power it has thus far achieved, but must gain in lustre until the day when the working class follows the path it limns and its mission will be finished.

Fraternally submitted,  
Eric Hass,  
Editor WEEKLY PEOPLE.

## APPENDIX A.

### I.

#### Platform of the Socialist Labor Party.

Socialism or Capitalism—that is the crucial issue confronting the workers of America!

Shall we institute a society of collective property, production for use, plenty for all and international peace, or shall we allow predatory capitalism to drag society back into a new dark ages?

The Socialist Labor Party of America, at its 20th National Convention in the City of New York. April 29, 1940, reiterates that capitalism cannot be mended, but must be ended. Indisputable evidence of hopeless social decay is apparent nationally in the concentration of wealth and power, on the one hand, and perpetual mass unemployment, and insecurity among the workers, on the other. Internationally the breakdown of capitalism reveals itself in world chaos—a desperate death struggle between capitalist nations over the world's markets and spheres of influence.

We hold that the existing contradiction between the theory of democratic government and the fact of a despotic economic system—the private ownership of the natural and social opportunities—divides the nation into two classes: the non-producing, but owning, Capitalist Class, and the producing but propertiless Working Class; throws society into the convulsions of the Class Struggle; and invariably perverts government to the uses and benefit of the Capitalist Class.

The incompetence of the Capital-

ist Class and its unfitness to rule any longer stand conspicuously demonstrated. Capitalist Class rule has created slums in the cities faster than it has torn them down. It has thrown millions of workers on the industrial scrap-heap barely to exist on the degrading pittance of relief. Its minimum wage has placed the stamp of approval on a starvation wage and in great industrial areas the "minimum wage" has become the *maximum* wage. In its insane efforts to raise prices and create scarcity, it has hailed drouths as blessings and bumper crops as a curse. Through its executive committee, the Political State, it has wantonly destroyed the surplus while millions were ill fed.

Capitalist political henchmen have placated the workers with sops and relief and the promise of jobs with the restoration of production. But when production soared above the 1929 peak, in December, 1939, its staunchest apologists admitted that higher production had been effected without reducing unemployment. In spite of billions spent for relief and additional billions spent to "prime the pump," in spite of scores of reforms acclaimed as "victories" for the workers, in spite of prodigious programs for rehousing, reclamation, resettlement, and work relief—unemployment and insecurity among the workers are as rampant as ever. To swell its profits, the capitalist class seeks in the laboratory still newer means of cheapening commodities, new methods of eliminating workers, thus consigning them to permanent unemployment.

Private ownership stands as a



solid wall between the useful producers and the product of their labor. The Socialist Labor Party declares that this wall shall be battered down and the wealth of the nation be made available to all who perform useful labor. Under Socialism, machines, collectively owned and operated for the benefit of society, can be made to fulfill the promise of the age and bring an end to unemployment and poverty. Instead of eliminating workers, socially owned and constantly improved machinery will eliminate hours from the working day, giving leisure and affluence to all.

Unable to solve the problems at home, the capitalist class diverts attention from its failures to the anarchy abroad. The long anticipated war is now an irrevocable fact. Capitalist democracy is perishing in its flames. The belligerents which boasted the broadest liberties have scrapped the conquests of centuries of struggle for freedom over night. Perceptibly America is being drawn into the bloody vortex. Its exports have shifted from grain, fruit and plows to war-planes, guns and munitions. On this grim traffic is its "prosperity" based. War feeds on commerce; commerce feeds on war. Under the pretext of "national defense" and to a chorus of declamations for peace, its statesmen, New Deal, old deal, liberal and conservative alike, gird the nation for its fateful role. Punchinello-like, the political henchmen of the capitalist class move as their masters pull the strings.

War referendums, pacifism and anti-war resolutions are futile, childish gestures. We hold that, given the capitalist system with its mutual

antagonisms and relentless struggle for markets, American involvement in the European war is inescapable. Capitalism means war; one plank of capitalism means the whole of capitalism. To oppose one plank only is to leave all others standing and thus render abortive all seeming success against the monster. It is the capitalist system itself which must be destroyed!

Against this insane social system the Socialist Labor Party raises the banner of revolution and calls upon the working class to organize politically and industrially for the conquest of power.

**POLITICAL ORGANIZATION:** The Constitution of the United States provides for its own amendment. The Constitution thereby recognizes and legalizes revolution. Our people hold the government in the hollow of their hand. We propose, therefore, that the revolutionary change be effected by the peaceful and civilized means of the ballot.

In presenting the issue—Socialism or Capitalism—and a program for its solution the Socialist Labor Party stands alone. All other parties, whether Republican, Democratic, "Socialist," "Labor," "Progressive," or "Communist," propose reforms which tend to preserve capitalism but fail to improve the lot of the workers. Therefore, we call upon the toilers of America, in order to implement their hope for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, to cast their ballot for the Socialist Labor Party, for the abolition of the capitalist system.

**ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION:** Recognizing the simple truth that **RIGHT** without the **MIGHT** to support it is useless and meaning-

less, we call upon the workers of America to organize themselves into integral Socialist Industrial Unions to enforce the demand for collective ownership proclaimed through the ballot. But we at the same time caution the workers that such unions *must be organized*, for none now exist. The C.I.O., A. F. of L., and similar organizations are agencies of capitalism for the reason that they are pledged to maintain the system of private property, and structurally they lend themselves preeminently to the furthering of capitalist interests.

Organized *as a class*, along industrial lines, the workers can act instantaneously, and with such momentum that no power on earth can stop them. Only the thoroughly integrated Socialist Industrial Unions can block a brutal reaction, should the outvoted, expropriated capitalists rebel against the explicit decision of the majority.

**SOCIALIST ADMINISTRATION:** More than an invincible force behind Labor's ballot, the Socialist Industrial Union organizes the workers intelligently *to carry on production*, thus avoiding a chaotic period of transition. Finally, the Socialist Industrial Union becomes *the Government of the Socialist Republic*, supplanting the outworn, reactionary and inefficient capitalist Political State. *Democratically elected representatives* of the industrial constituencies will form an Industrial Union Congress, the duties of which will be the simple ones of directing, coordinating and supervising production for the benefit of all.

Workers of America! The issue of our age can no longer be postponed! Vote for the Socialist Re-

public! Organize the Socialist Industrial Union NOW to put a speedy end to barbarous capitalism. Unite under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party NOW to demand—

**THE WORKSHOPS TO THE WORKERS!**

**THE PRODUCT TO THE PRODUCERS!**

**ALL POWER TO THE SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNION!**

## II.

### **Declaration of Fundamental Principles.**

The Socialist Labor Party of America, in convention assembled, in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, reasserts the inalienable right of man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We hold that the purpose of government is to secure to every citizen the enjoyment of this right; but taught by experience we hold, furthermore, that such right is illusory to the majority of the people, to wit, the working class, under the present system of economic inequality that is essentially destructive of **THEIR** life, **THEIR** liberty, and **THEIR** happiness.

We hold that man cannot exercise his right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without the ownership of the land on and the tools with which to work. Deprived of these, his life, his liberty and his fate fall into the hands of the class that owns those essentials for work and production. This ownership is today held by the minority in society, the



capitalist class, exercising through this ownership and control an economic despotism without parallel in history.

Government statistics\* establish that 59 per cent of the nation's wealth is owned by 1 per cent of the population; that 33 per cent of the wealth is owned by 12 per cent of the population, thus finally establishing that 92 per cent of the nation's wealth is owned by 13 per cent of the population, leaving the vast majority, the working class, or 87 per cent of the population, the owners of but 8 per cent of the nation's wealth.

The ownership of the bulk of the nation's wealth by the few is conclusive evidence that labor is robbed of the major portion of the product which it alone produces. Thus the worker is denied the means of self-employment, and, by compulsory idleness in wage slavery, is deprived of even the necessities of life.

We hold that the existing contradiction between the theory of democratic government and the fact of a despotic economic system—the private ownership of the natural and social opportunities—divides the nation into two classes: the non-producing, but owning, Capitalist Class, and the producing, but propertiless, Working Class; throws society into the convulsions of the Class Struggle, and invariably perverts government to the uses and benefit of the Capitalist Class.

The time is now here when, as the natural result of social evolution, this system has worked out its own downfall. Having completed its nor-

mal development, the capitalist system, and its political reflex, the State, are now outworn. No longer able to dispose readily of the huge quantities of surplus commodities in foreign markets, each capitalist nation seeks desperately to crowd out its competitors, with the result that wars and conflicts convulse the civilized world. In this mad struggle for survival, the working classes of all nations are the chief sufferers.

Against such a system the Socialist Labor Party raises the banner of revolt and demands the unconditional surrender of the Capitalist Class. In this supreme crisis no reform measures will stand, and history teaches that where a social revolution is pending, and, for whatever reason, is not accomplished, reaction, dictatorship, is the alternative. Having outlived its social usefulness, capitalism must give way to a new social order—a social order wherein government shall rest on industry, on the basis of useful occupations, instead of resting on territorial (political) representation. This new social system can only be the Socialist Industrial Union form of Government if the needs of the vast majority are to be served, and if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been in the past. Upon the despoiled workers rests the duty of effecting this revolutionary change in a peaceful, civilized manner, using the ballot and all that thereby hangs in order to effect the change.

We, therefore, call upon the wage workers of America to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a classconscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them.

We further call upon the wage

workers of America to organize into integral Socialist Industrial Unions to enforce the fiat of their ballot, and to fulfill the needs and purposes of the Socialist Industrial Union Government. Industrial Unionism is the Socialist Republic **IN THE MAKING**; the goal reached — the Industrial Union — is the Socialist Republic in operation.

And we also call upon all other intelligent and social-minded citizens to place themselves squarely upon the ground of Working Class interests, and join with us in this mighty and noble work of human emancipation, so that we may put summary end to the existing barbarous class conflict by placing the land and all the means of production, transportation and distribution into the hands of the useful producers as a collective body, and substituting the Socialist Industrial Cooperative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial and international wars and social disorder—a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

### III.

## Resolution on the European War.

Imperialist wars are absolutely inevitable *so long as* private ownership of the means of social production exists. Expressed in other words: The rivalries between imperialist (capitalist) powers over world markets, sources of raw materials, and

spheres of economic and political influence, inevitably lead to imperialist wars. The capitalists divide the world, not out of personal malice, or because of so-called ideological antipathies, but because the degree of capital concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method. They partition and divide the world "in proportion to strength." There cannot be any other method of division under the system of commodity production and capitalism.

The Twentieth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party of America, in session in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, declares that the war now raging in Europe between Nazi Germany and the Anglo-French powers is an imperialist war.

Nazi Germany, through the mouth of the frenetic spokesman for German imperialism, has openly avowed that Germany must trade or fight. But the aims of the Nazi plunderbund, grown powerful through merciless exploitation of the German working class, are blocked by the Franco-British Empires.

On the other hand, the Franco-British imperialists cannot tolerate the challenge to their supremacy. If their vile collaboration with the Nazis in the subjugation and annexation of neighboring states seems to dispute this, let it be recalled that their fear of the working class at home, as well as their military unpreparedness, and, finally, the hope that Germany would embroil itself in a war with Soviet Russia, were the factors which led to the disgraceful Munich capitulation.

Abundant evidence is at hand which gives the lie to the claim that

\*Federal Trade Commission Report, 1926.



the Allied Powers fight for any cause other than their own imperialist interests. The fact that Franco-British imperialists aided in the rise to power of the degenerate Nazis belies their present simulated hatred of Hitlerism; Franco-British imperialists delivered Ethiopia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Albania over to the Fascist hordes, thus branding as monstrous hypocrisy the canard that this is a war to preserve the integrity of small nations; British imperialists, by brazenly breaking their pledged word to the people of India and the Jews in Palestine, thus making a travesty of treaties, themselves give the lie to the unctuous claim that they fight for adherence to the terms of treaties; finally, the tyrannous subjugation of colonial peoples by Franco-British imperialists and the virtual dictatorships established over the workers at home under the pretext of "war effort" dispute the plea that they are engaged in a crusade for personal liberties.

In view of the indisputable evidence which places both belligerents in the imperialist category, as nations ruled by the exploiters of the useful producers; be it—

*Resolved*, That it is the duty of the proletarians, and especially of all parties subscribing to the principles of International Socialism, to oppose with all their might the extension of the war, and all self-seeking intervention which would spread the conflagration and enlarge the area of hostilities; and be it further

*Resolved*, That it is the solemn duty of all proletarians to hasten the advent of Socialism, which alone can establish a lasting and amicable order of things in international rela-

tions, now delivered over to capitalist anarchy, imperialist rivalry, and to the furies of Jingoism; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That, in accordance with the Marxian principle that every working class must consummate the revolution to Socialism in its own country, we call upon the working class of America to avert the impending involvement of America in the European War by organizing politically to demand the abolition of private ownership, the cause of imperialist war, and into a mighty, integral, Socialist Industrial Union to enforce the collective mandate. By organizing for the abolition of wage slavery alone can the American working class serve notice that it will not be hurled into this stupid and sanguinary conflict of capitalist imperialism.

#### IV.

### Resolution on the U.S.S.R.

The irrepressible national and international class struggle between the owning class and the working class is a fact the denial of which by any group or party *ipso facto* removes that group, whatever its Socialist pretensions, from the International Marxist Movement, and irrespective of the manner of the denial—that is, whether by denial in words, or by acts, such as, for instance, entering into alliances with imperialist and fascist powers.

The emancipation of the working class must, and can only, be the classconscious act of the working class itself. It can no more result from the benevolent act of another

class within a nation than it can be imposed by force from without upon one nation by another. In the words of the founders of International Socialism: "The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."

We hold these to be basic and inviolate Socialist truths, and absolutely binding upon all who profess adherence to the cause of the International Proletariat and the principles of Marxian Socialism.

Soviet Russia, under the treacherous bureaucratic dictatorship of Joseph Stalin and his myrmidons, has, in the light of these truths, repudiated every vestige of claim to being either the leader of, or inspiration for, the international movement for working class emancipation.

Through its alliance with the most degenerate representative of international capitalism, Nazi Germany, it has become, *ipso facto*, the accomplice of Nazi Germany. We declare, moreover, that on the basis of the record and the facts, the pact Stalinist Russia entered into with Nazi Germany became the signal for commencing the European War and that, in so doing, Stalinist Russia forfeited all claim to being a force for international peace.

In the annexation of Eastern Poland in conjunction with its Nazi mentors, and especially in the invasion of Finland in violation of solemn treaties and on the flimsy pretexts (a) that Finland harbored the incredible dream of expansion to the Urals and (b) that Finnish workers and peasants had appealed to the Red Army to "liberate" them—by, in other words, adopting *in toto* the barbarous methods of Nazism, Stalinist

Russia has committed a crime without parallel in the annals of Socialism.

The subsequent "peace" imposed on Finland, after the sacrifice of tens of thousands of Russian and Finnish lives, laid bare the hypocrisy and mendacity of these pretexts and exposed Stalinist Russia's invasion as an act of naked aggression with the object of acquiring territory and military bases.

In the light of the foregoing facts, the Socialist Labor Party of America, in National Convention assembled, in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, withdraws its heretofore extended recognition of the present regime in Soviet Russia as Marxist, and declares its conviction that the Stalinist bureaucracy has in fact, if not in words, repudiated Marxism, disrupted international working class solidarity, and criminally betrayed the cause of the world proletariat, and in particular betrayed the Russian workers who are being misled into a support of the imperialist adventures and power politics generally of the said Stalinist bureaucracy. Wherefore be it

*Resolved*, That we extend revolutionary greetings to the workers in Russia and express the hope that before long they will replace the present anti-Marxist policy of its government with the genuine Marxist policy and principles upheld by Lenin, and the great proletarian leaders of the past, so shamefully betrayed by Joseph Stalin and his cohorts in Russia and in the various capitalist countries; and be it further

*Resolved*, That, despite the virtual abolition of individual private property within Stalinist Russia, all hope that the U.S.S.R. would, by exam-



ple, serve to inspire and to that extent hasten the world proletarian revolution has no longer any basis; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That we denounce as anti-Marxist and anti-working class all those groups and individuals infesting the working class movement in America, who applaud these unparalleled crimes.

## V.

### Resolution on International Socialism.

There is in the world today no international Socialist organization worthy of the name.

The moribund Second International, which succumbed to nationalism during the First World War, thereby violating the very essence of internationalism, exists as a mere auxiliary of capitalism. Its main "pillar," the German Social Democracy, has been swept away, a victim of its own treachery. Such lesser "pillars" as remain, the Socialist party of France, the British Labor party, etc., are indistinguishable in their actions and declarations from the so-called "liberal" parties of the bourgeoisie. Wherever they have achieved power, as in France, England, Denmark, Norway, etc., they have administered the affairs of the bourgeoisie, betrayed and sold out the workers, preached and practised the iniquitous policy of class peace, and left the toilers in bewilderment and despair. As the Social Democrats disarmed the workers and paved the way for the Fascist onslaught in Italy, Austria, and Ger-

many, so do the remaining Social Democracies prepare the workers of their respective countries for industrial feudal bondage. In the present war they play the same shameful, chauvinistic role played a quarter of a century ago, outjinging capitalist jingoes. Corrupt, opportunistic, nationalistic to the core, the affiliates of the so-called Second International are enemies of Socialism and deserve the scorn and contempt of the international working class.

The so-called Third International is, in fact, an adjunct of the foreign office of the U.S.S.R. Its policies are dictated, not by the principles of the international class struggle of the proletariat, but by the *national* interests of Stalinist Russia. In its crazily careening career, it has trampled upon every Marxian principle, collaborating with the enemy as unblushingly as the Second International. Today it stands in the unique position of tacitly supporting the most ruthless representative of degenerate capitalism and barbarous enemy of working class emancipation, Nazi Germany. Because its affiliates lack the independence to hold, or even propose, divergent views, the Third International is nothing but a tool of the Stalinist bureaucracy and is the unblushing partner in the loathsome crimes committed by that autocratic bureaucracy.

Last, the so-called Fourth International is the creature of Leon Trotsky. Existing largely on paper, the so-called Fourth International repudiates the fundamental Marxian principle that the social and economic topography of the land determines the tactics of the Socialist movement and exhibits the same de-

grading Machiavellian opportunism, and tendency to collaborate with the enemy, present in the Third International which spawned it.

The Socialist Labor Party, in National Convention assembled in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, reaffirms its allegiance to the principles of International Socialism as laid down by Marx and Engels, and reiterates its clear-cut adherence to the international class struggle principle as enunciated by Daniel De Leon, and previous resolutions adopted by National Conventions of the Party and endorsed by its membership. Therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Socialist Labor Party continue to hold itself aloof from, and to condemn, the corrupt, opportunistic and class-collaborating so-called internationals which now exist; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we maintain this position until such a time as the organization of a bona fide Marxian international is possible and feasible; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That we take this opportunity to extend the hand of fraternal relationship to the Socialist Labor Parties of Great Britain, Australia and Canada, now laboring valiantly to advance the cause of International Socialism under the adverse conditions of war.

## VI.

### Resolution on Unemployment.

In 1933 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "No country, however rich, can afford to waste its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our

greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order.... As for this country, I stand or fall by my refusal to accept as a necessary condition of our future a permanent army of the unemployed."

Brave words, but like fire under an empty kettle. The New Deal had no solution to the problem of unemployment and has no solution today. One of its leading exponents, Harry Hopkins, declared May 23, 1937, that "it may be theoretically possible that unemployment may some day no longer have a place in our economic picture, but," he added, "that day won't happen in your lifetime or mine."

The New Deal cannot solve the problem for the reason that the problem is insoluble within the framework of capitalism. The economic laws operating under capitalism compel each individual capitalist enterprise to adopt the newest and best labor-saving (labor-displacing) machinery and methods to survive the competitive struggle. As a result, tens of thousands of workers in all industries are thrown annually upon the industrial scrap-heap to exist on the pittance of a dole. The fantastic argument that machines "make jobs," thoroughly discredited by facts recently published by the National Resources Committee, as well as by the overwhelming evidence which daily meets the eye, reveals the fear and desperation of the capitalist class.

In addition to those toilers displaced by technological improvements, nearly half a million new wage slaves are annually thrown on the labor market through the increase in population.



In the face of this persistent problem and plagued by the fear that the patience of the workers will one day be exhausted, the employing class gratefully turns to a war economy for a "solution." After having denounced as seekers after "fool's gold" those who would profit from traffic in arms, the President, on September 21, 1939, declared in connection with amendments to the so-called Neutrality Act: "From a purely material point of view what is the advantage to us in sending all manner of articles across the ocean for final processing there when we could give employment to thousands by doing it here?"

Thus do the most eminent spokesmen for capitalism confess their inability to cope with the problem. Is it any wonder, then, that the ruling class callously toys with the idea of war and wholesale slaughter as a "solution" to unemployment?

In the light of the foregoing facts and the stark, indisputable fact of ten or twelve million *permanently* unemployed; be it

*Resolved*, That the Socialist Labor Party, at its Twentieth National Convention, in New York City, April 29, 1940, calls upon the working class to face the problem squarely and organize to abolish the baneful conditions of decadent capitalism by reconstructing society along Socialist lines so that machines may become the blessing they should be instead of the curse they are today; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we denounce as cruel deceptions such futile schemes as are advanced by the C.I.O., A. F. of L., New Deal and similar agencies of capitalism, which promise to solve unemployment, but which only

succeed in diverting the attention of the workers from the real solution, viz., the abolition of capitalism.

## VII.

### Resolution on the Economic Organization of Labor.

The Twentieth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party of America, in session in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, reaffirms its previous stand on the question of the economic organization of labor and declares:

The integrally organized industrial organization of the working class forms the necessary framework of the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor, and constitutes the organic form of the Socialist Administrative powers of the Republic:

The economic organization, or Socialist Industrial Union, is, moreover, the revolutionary force whereby the working class, on the occasion of its victory at the polls, can take physical possession of, hold and operate, the factories, mills, mines and other means of social production, thus assuring the triumph of the Socialist Revolution and frustrating a conceivable "pro-slavery" rebellion on the part of the outvoted capitalist class:

The present so-called unions viz., the American Federation of Labor, Congress of Industrial Organizations and kindred organizations, are designed to perpetuate the wages system. Based on the fatuous precepts of "brotherhood between capital and labor," they dull the edge of the class struggle with devious devices,

such as collective bargaining and seniority.

Such pro-capitalist organizations, far from serving the interests of the working class, are veritable job trusts in the complete control of a junta of labor fakers. Such unions effect innumerable divisions within labor's ranks and are totally incompetent to prevent or slow up the steady retreat to industrial serfdom. Therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the movement for working class emancipation needs both a political and economic organization, the former to agitate, educate and conduct the struggle for the conquest of the capitalist-controlled Political State upon the civilized plane of the ballot; the latter to back up the Socialist ballot with an invincible force, a force essential for the lockout of the capitalist class; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we hasten with all our effort the formation of the Socialist Industrial Union to accomplish the Socialist reconstruction before the reaction now gathering plunges society into a new Dark Ages of perpetual war and industrial feudalism; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That we denounce and expose pro-capitalist unionism as an instrument to bridle and mulct the working class, lead it into the capitalist political shambles and prevent it from uniting on its class interests for the abolition of wage slavery.

## VIII.

### Resolution on Civil Liberties.

One hundred and fifty years ago John Curran uttered the warning: "The condition upon which God has

given liberty to man is eternal vigilance."

With no illusions concerning the origin of such personal liberties as are possessed by American workers; with the full knowledge that they were wrested from tyranny at the toll of rivers of blood; and in full consciousness that such liberties tend to become hollow mockeries in the measure that the system of capitalist class rule degenerates, the Socialist Labor Party, in National Convention assembled in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, declares:

All history demonstrates that *general* assaults upon the citadel of civil liberties are preceded by repeated forays and flank attacks. The plan is to weary the people until they can no longer arouse spirit for defense. Such a plan is in operation today.

In state legislatures throughout the land bills have been submitted and furtively passed without debate or publicity which raise insurmountable barriers to placing the candidates of minority parties on the ballots. Their wording is so suspiciously similar and the manner in which they are passed is so uniformly stealthy as to leave little doubt of the existence of a concerted and coordinated conspiracy.

In state and national legislatures a veritable anti-alien hysteria has been in progress for more than a year. Alien deportation bills, proposals for fingerprinting aliens and establishing concentration camps for undeportable aliens, and bills which aim to introduce the hated European system of internal passports recall vividly the post-World War alien and spy-hunts in which the rights of citizens and aliens alike were ruthlessly trampled on.



The sinister reestablishment of the General Intelligence Bureau (anti-alien squad) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, by special order of the President, also recalls the malodorous regime of A. Mitchell Palmer. This bureau possesses all the earmarks of a nascent Nazi *Gestapo* or a Russian *Ogpu*. We declare that, whatever the avowed purpose of this bureau, its real purpose is to harass individuals and minority groups who hold divergent political views, thus creating in America the hateful practice of punishing people for mere opinions.

Not furtively, but with vulgar ostentation, the Congressional Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities, popularly known as the Dies Committee, rides roughshod over the elementary rights of the people. For these brazen and shameless encroachments Congress shares the blame. Indeed, one of the most ominous aspects of the Dies investigation is the almost unanimous support given it by Congress. Emboldened by this support, the Dies Committee has recently committed the most outrageous offenses against the Bill of Rights (conducting search and seizure raids in contemptuous disregard of law and civil liberties). These offenses, we declare, are all the more contemptible in view of the arrogant and insolent attempts at justification by the committee's chairman, Martin Dies.

Although the activities of this committee are now directed at individuals and groups which are allegedly agents of foreign powers or organizations, the non-publicized enabling act of Congress under which it operates is sufficiently broad to include all organizations which fail

to conform to Mr. Dies's conception of society. Specifically this enabling act provides for the investigation of propaganda "*of domestic origin*" which "attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution."

We hold that this portion of the enabling act is, itself, a subversion of the Constitution, and an effort to reintroduce despotism in the folds of the flag. The present "form" of government is *not* guaranteed by the Constitution. The very essence of the Constitution, and the feature which made of it a revolutionary document, is that it provides the means for peaceably altering and changing the form of government. Nothing today need be feared so much by liberty-loving people as the subversion of this fundamental feature of our American Constitution.

In the light of the aforementioned encroachments on our civil liberties, and innumerable additional encroachments unmentioned, but known to all; be it

*Resolved*, That we denounce as crassly reactionary and contrary to the spirit and word of the Constitution and that prior document, which is, in effect, its preamble, the Declaration of Independence, the sinister actions of State and National Legislatures, F.B.I., Dies Committee and other governmental and non-governmental bodies engaged in restricting the ballot and in paring away the Bill of Rights; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we call upon the American working class to put beyond the reach of subversive, reactionary ruling class elements those precious rights and liberties guaranteed in the Bill of Rights by over-

throwing capitalist class rule by the peaceful means of the ballot backed up by their integral Socialist Industrial Unions.

## IX.

### Resolution on the National Association of Broadcasters Code.

Article One of our Bill of Rights declares: "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech...."

What Congress cannot do, a group of irresponsible capitalists controlling one of the major avenues for public expression has done! In the guise of "regulation," the National Association of Broadcasters has adopted a Code which constitutes in fact a form of censorship and an abridgment of freedom of speech.

The Twentieth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party in the City of New York, April 29, 1940, holding that the liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights are *rights* and not privileges, declares:

That the National Association of Broadcasters, in adopting a Code which proscribes the sale of broadcasting time "for the presentation of controversial issues...except political broadcasts"—which it defines as "broadcasts in connection with a political campaign in behalf of or against the candidacy of a legally qualified candidate for nomination or election to public office, etc."—has usurped power not even granted to the responsible legislative bodies of the land.

Its hypocritical defense of this

code, to wit, that "free time" is allocated for the discussion of "controversial issues" and that individuals and organizations which cannot afford to buy time now have equal opportunity for expression, we declare, is pure cant. Proof of this lies in the indisputable fact that broadcasting time is given *and sold* freely to individuals and groups presenting the employers' point of view on divers social questions, while the Socialist Labor Party is repeatedly denied both free time and the opportunity to purchase time to present the Marxian viewpoint. The attitude assumed by the National Broadcasters that the views upholding the present form of government and system of private ownership are *not* controversial while the views which challenge the present form of government and system of private ownership *are* controversial is characteristic of entrenched ruling classes, and reveals the biased, subversive character of the Code.

The Socialist Labor Party has, since the Code went into effect, been barred from radio stations which formerly sold time to the Party freely for the open discussion of grave problems and the presentation of a program for their solution. We declare that, in barring the Socialist Labor Party, the National Association of Broadcasters has done more than abridge the rights of one minority party. It has infringed on a basic and fundamental American freedom. No law authorized its action; no Constitution sanctioned it; no election ratified it. Therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Socialist Labor Party denounces the N.A.B. Code proscribing the sale of broadcasting



time for the discussion of "controversial issues," as high-handed, irresponsible censorship, not unlike that prevailing in totalitarian nations; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we expose to the pitiless scorn of freedom-loving people the hypocritical and vicious reactionary character of this censorship and proscription; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That we explore every avenue for lawful redress, while simultaneously urging the working class to organize politically and industrially to take over the means of social production (including all broadcasting facilities) and place our liberties in the safekeeping of the people united under the Industrial Republic of Emancipated Labor.

## X

### Declaration on Strikes.

[The National Convention directed the National Executive Committee of the Party to prepare and issue a declaration on strikes clarifying and summarizing the Party's attitude on same. The following was adopted by the N.E.C. in keeping with the instructions of the convention, hence its incorporation in these published proceedings of the National Convention of 1940.]

1. The Socialist Labor Party declares that strikes by workers under capitalism constitute the logical and unavoidable reactions on the part of the workers to the inhuman and unbearable conditions imposed upon them by a social system (capitalism) which places the workers in the

category of commodities, and which accords them as wage slaves a treatment economically not essentially different from that accorded the chattel slave or serf. Driven by the lash of hunger; subdued largely by the thought of the privations visited upon their loved ones if they refuse to submit to being exploited, but goaded finally to rebellion by the utter misery and degradation to which they and their families are eventually reduced, it is inevitable that they should strike back at their exploiters, however blindly, and however mistaken they may be in their manner of striking back.

While reserving the right to criticize the inadequacy of the methods employed by the workers in seeking redress on the economic field, the Socialist Labor Party applauds the spirit which prompts the workers to strike against the inhuman wage slavery under which they suffer, and, reaffirming its previous resolutions and declarations on this head, pledges itself to the support of striking workers in any manner consistent with the principles and ultimate aim of the Party. In so doing we also reaffirm our acceptance of the statement by Daniel De Leon in his immortal address, "What Means This Strike," to wit:

"The attitude of workingmen engaged in a bona fide strike is an inspiring one. It is an earnest that slavery will not prevail. The slave alone who will not rise against his master, who will meekly bend his back to the lash and turn his cheek to him who plucks his beard—that slave alone is hopeless. But the slave who... persists, despite failures and poverty, in rebelling, there is always hope for,"

2. The Socialist Labor Party, however, warns the workers of America that strikes in and by themselves cannot solve their problems, let alone abolish the cause which creates these problems, namely, the capitalist system. We emphasize that however understandable is their resort to strikes and related activities, such efforts and attempts at ameliorating their lot must prove futile while the capitalist system of private ownership in the land and the means of production prevails. As the great champion of the working class, Karl Marx, once said:

"...the general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages or to push the *value of labor* more or less to its *minimum limit*. Such being the tendency of *things* in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital, and abandon their attempts at making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation.... The necessity of debating their price with the capitalist is inherent to their [the workers'] condition of having to sell themselves as commodities. By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement."

While the workers are wage slaves under capitalism, their condition is bound to grow worse and worse, and, whatever incidental improvements or increases in wages groups of work-

ers may achieve, are secured either at the expense of the working class as a whole, or because of a temporary condition which happens to favor such groups of workers economically. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the facts referred to, the workers *must* resist the encroachments of their capitalist exploiters, and through their day-by-day struggles seek at least to maintain the prevailing working conditions where these cannot be improved.

3. The Socialist Labor Party points to the fact that capitalism fatedly creates conditions which render the lot of the workers ever more precarious and insecure. The Party also points to the fact that attempts at this stage at bettering their lot through legislative enactments can result in nothing but the fastening of the chains of wage slavery upon them ever more firmly and securely, while at the same time such legislative enactments in effect constitute certification of their slavery, and amount, in fact, to a codification of the terms of this slavery, besides accelerating the tendencies, and consolidating the social and economic forces, which, barring Socialism, must inevitably lead to absolute economic serfdom. The Socialist Labor Party, accordingly, heeding the words, and acting in the spirit of labor's great champions, Karl Marx and Daniel De Leon, urges the working class of America to organize into class unions to the end of doing away with the causes which now reduce them to the status of wage slaves, and which inescapably block their every attempt to throw off the yoke of this degrading and intolerable slavery. The primary cause is capitalism, but among the subsidiary



causes stand out prominently the outworn craft unions and the reactionary, so-called mass-organizations known as the C.I.O., and kindred bodies. And last, but not least, there stand as enemies of labor's emancipation from virtual economic serfdom the corrupt labor leaders. Whether these are of the A. F. of L. or C.I.O. variety matters not at all. While on the political field there stand prominently as labor's enemies the political reformers and visionaries who fraudulently claim to be able to effect improvement of the lot of the working class under capitalism through the mere enactment of laws, even as the so-called labor leaders falsely claim to be able to do so on the economic field.

To develop the requisite power with which to resist the encroachments of their capitalist exploiters, and eventually to effect their emancipation, the workers must organize into Socialist Industrial Unions, thoroughly integrated, prepared to take, hold and operate the industries when through the ballot a majority shall have decreed the abolition of capitalism, and the inauguration of the Socialist Republic of Labor.

4. Being unable to furnish employment to millions of workers, and fearing the consequences of these millions getting out of control and taking matters into their own hands, the capitalist class, through their political puppets in national and state governments, have been compelled to dole out relief, so-called, to the starving jobless workers, though constantly seeking to keep down to its lowest level, or to reduce to such level, the pittance which they otherwise find themselves compelled to hand out. The Socialist Labor Par-

ty warns the workers not to barter their manhood, or their political rights, privileges and prerogatives as citizens, for such miserable doles. While under the circumstances the workers are compelled to, and naturally ought to, accept such so-called "reliefs," we warn them not to regard such "relief" as either gifts or as measures leading to permanent improvement of their condition. Where such "relief" is not absolutely prompted by their capitalist masters' mortal fear of working class rebellion, they are intended as bribes by scheming and corrupt or reactionary politicians. "Relief," then, should obviously be accepted by the workers as the very least they are entitled to as victims of a social system whose beneficiaries live on the wealth produced solely by the working class.

5. To sum up. While, therefore, the members of the Socialist Labor Party must never fail to explain to the workers the ultimate futility of all attempts made by them to better their conditions under capitalism, and while Socialist Labor Party members must constantly point out to the workers that there is no hope for them except through a speedy overthrow of capitalism and all its works, on the basis of the program and principles of the Socialist Labor Party, no member of the Party should belittle or underestimate the social significance of strikes and similar manifestations of working class rebellion, for the reasons stated before, and on the principle, moreover, that a contented or submissive slave is a degraded and all but hopeless creature. While it is not the function of S.L.P. members to encourage workers to strike

under the prevailing circumstances, it is their duty to encourage and stimulate the spirit and the sentiment which prompt the workers to strike, and they should also at the same time attempt to direct that sentiment into revolutionary channels via Socialist political and economic organizations, on the lines laid down by the Socialist Labor Party.

## XI.

### Speech of Acceptance of John W. Aiken

*Socialist Labor Party Candidate for  
President of the United States*

It is, of course, no mean distinction and honor to be the Presidential candidate of the Socialist Labor Party and, of course, by the same token it implies that that Presidential candidate must be prepared to undertake the rigors of an extensive tour throughout the country. But not only in this respect is the responsibility great. I believe that under the circumstances prevailing today the Socialist Labor Party is faced with greater tasks than ever faced it before, because we are living at the most crucial moment in the history of capitalism. We are living at a time when the capitalist system faces complete bankruptcy and collapse. As a matter of fact, since it has been my pleasure to be standard-bearer for the Socialist Labor Party, since 1932, and since it has been my fortune, too, more or less to represent the Socialist Labor Party and spread its program, interpret events as they have arisen in that period during campaigns, I can

readily see now that throughout these twelve years the National Conventions of the Socialist Labor Party have catalogued the decline of capitalism.

Those who are curious enough might examine the proceedings of each National Convention during this period, examining its pronouncements on events, and they will become convinced that the analysis of the Socialist Labor Party throughout this period has been a correct one, and that its position throughout this period has been thoroughly vindicated by the course of events.

And so at this moment, too, there is no longer, I think, any question in the minds of intelligent people that the capitalist system is incapable of maintaining that measure of stability which would guarantee the working class of the nation a modicum of security.

I think that the proof is conclusive now that none of the political parties of capitalism can do anything to restore the so-called prosperity of other days, when, to some extent at least, workers were assured some sort of income from private industry. But now, after some seven years of political experimentation in Washington, the utter bankruptcy of the capitalist politicians and political parties and their inability to do anything about this ever deepening economic crisis are plain.

We can say, today, that the old-line Republican and Democratic parties have reached that point where there no longer exist any differences between them such as had existed historically; today they are identical as is apparent from the statements made by their representatives. This is apparent from the campaign mate-



rial that is being put out by both those parties. That is of significance to us because this bankruptcy of the old-line political parties affords the opportunity for the Socialist Labor Party more easily to impress its philosophy and program upon the minds of the American working class.

The times are ripe. Certainly, looking at conditions throughout society today, any one must be convinced that the working class has no other source to turn to for light and understanding, for the solution of this problem that faces them, than the Socialist Labor Party.

As to all the other so-called radical parties—they too have demonstrated an incapacity to appreciate and analyze the nature and problems that confront the working class today.

The Socialist party has, I think, convinced every serious and intelligent student of political and economic history—those, I mean, who understand the nature of capitalism and the causes which have brought about the present situation. To them, I think, it is apparent that the Socialist party has gone by the board. Examining the statements of its candidate for President I have been amazed at the utter bankruptcy and the utter incapacity to properly analyze the economic problems confronting the people of this country today. And what is of still more importance is that he and the party he represents do not, in fact, stand for a true Socialist program. It is almost impossible to distinguish between the S.P. and the regular capitalist parties. The Socialist party is essentially a party of petty capitalist reform.

The Communist party, in turn, has become thoroughly discredited in the eyes of every intelligent worker through its support of the Nazis, and its vacillating policies on war, democracy, revolution, and many other questions. For that matter, double-dealing and duplicity have characterized its entire history. Communist party leaders advance as an argument in support of their shifting policies that they adjust their program to changing objective conditions, but actually the only things that have changed each time have been the calendar and their own minds. Such brazen conduct can never inspire in the workers that respect and confidence which is essential for the success of a revolutionary workers' party.

Meanwhile, the capitalist system goes merrily on to utter collapse. The productive forces of capitalist society have in many European countries burst asunder the democratic forms which formerly held governments together, and ruthless dictatorships directed against the workers are now in power. But even dictatorship cannot long preserve the institution of private property.

It is ridiculous to take the attitude, as many do, that fascism is merely a psychological manifestation of the egotism of some individual or group. On the contrary, fascism has its roots in society. Let us never forget that it was the industrial leaders of Germany who financed and in other ways supported Hitler in his rise to power. Decadent and putrescent capitalism is the soil from which spring the Hitlers. For that reason, if the circumstances justified it, the same thing would be

done by the ruling class of the United States.

Unless the working class organizes in accordance with the teachings of the Socialist Labor Party, then, indeed, the workers will fall under the iron heel of despotism. Our Party alone offers to the workers hope, guidance and correct organizational principles.

We must make special efforts, to a greater extent than ever before, to reach the workers with our program of revolutionary Industrial Unionism which is the only safeguard against war and reaction.

This is the task to which we of the Socialist Labor Party must devote ourselves in this campaign. In the measure that we are successful in reaching the million mass with this message of emancipation, in that measure shall we have laid the groundwork for the building of that Industrial Union for which the Party has striven unceasingly for many years.

## XII.

### Speech of Acceptance of Aaron M. Orange

*Socialist Labor Party Candidate for  
Vice President of the United States*

Comrade chairman, comrade delegates, members and friends: I am reminded of an observation, one made by Carl Sandburg: "Look out how you use proud words. When you let proud words go, it is not easy to call them back."

However, I intend to take the risk, for I have some proud words on the tip of my tongue and I do not intend calling these proud words back.

I am proud of being a member of the Socialist Labor Party whose scientific program, based on the principles of Marx and De Leon, is the only one worthy the serious consideration of the working class of the United States of America. I am proud of accepting the nomination for Vice President of the United States, and thus serving as mouthpiece of the organization in this National Campaign of 1940. I pledge to give my all—time, resources, energy—to the end that the Party's message be spread among the workers of America. I consider this the most serious responsibility that I have yet assumed in my young life and I hope that your confidence in me is justified.

## XIII.

### Addresses of Arnold Petersen and Eric Hass

*Over Station WHN, New York City,  
From the Capitol Hotel, April 27,  
1940, where the S.L.P. Golden  
Jubilee Banquet was being held.*

(Address of Arnold Petersen.)

The birth of a great idea is an event of momentous consequence to the world of men. If truly great, it will in time, in its practical application, shake society to its very foundation. And to be truly great it must transcend the mere fortunes of the individual whom it masters and to whom it comes as if it were a revelation, like the sudden light that came to Saul on the road to Damascus. If the conceiver of the idea is as great in his moral and intellectual integrity as the idea itself is great



it will cause the one possessed by it pain and anguish for, as someone has well said, "one of the greatest pains is the pain of a new idea." And those who take up the new idea must expect to share this anguish until the idea has found its proper application.

There have not been many births of truly great ideas in the history of mankind. Perhaps one could count them on ten fingers. Three or four, possibly, stand out as measuring up to true greatness, and among them we single out the discovery that was to revolutionize man's thinking concerning his species known as the Darwinian theory; the discovery that was to revolutionize man's thinking concerning his society and social relations known as the Marxian theory; and the discovery that is about to revolutionize man's thinking concerning the manner of effecting the pending social change, as well as man's concept as to the nature and form of that society, the actualizing of which merely awaits the active and organized support of the working class, the discovery now known, and undoubtedly to be known in the future, as the De Leonist theory.

The Socialist Labor Party is at present the sole carrier of this great idea, the De Leonist idea, and it is the birth of that idea fifty years ago—or, rather, of the movement which serves as its carrier—that we are celebrating here tonight. And what is this idea discovered by Daniel De Leon which is destined to shake society to its foundation, and profoundly to affect human relations for ages to come? It is this:

Basing himself on that other great idea discovered by Karl Marx, Daniel De Leon projected his great so-

cial idea in its three elements: (1) a rounded-out analysis of the present class society resting on capitalist private property; (2) the weapon or tool enabling the working class, of a certainty, to effect its emancipation from wage slavery, that is, the Socialist integrated Industrial Union; and (3) the Socialist Industrial Union society to succeed the present political society, or the capitalist system. The new form of society envisioned by the genius of De Leon and the great central idea of which he worked into a practical program, will constitute the third fundamental change in social and human relations since the beginning of recorded and scientifically inferred history.

The new society, with its vast increase in accumulated, transmissible and potentially unlimited wealth, will be non-political, and, in contrast to the political society of capitalism where government derives its representation from political or territorial divisions, its administrative or governing bodies will derive their representation from the *industries*—that is, it will rest on an industrial or occupational basis, thus ending, not only poverty and want, but class struggles and wars. For the first time in the annals of man, and fulfilling the promises of the past, there will be combined equality and freedom for all, and peace and plenty for all. It is to the realization of this idea and ideal that the labors of the Socialist Labor Party have been dedicated for fifty years, since the days in 1890 when Daniel De Leon formulated and projected the program and principles embodied in the Party—the program and principles which on this Golden Jubilee

occasion we re-dedicate ourselves to translate into those social forms and purposes which shall forever free man from want and drudgery and social strife.

In celebrating this Golden Jubilee of the Socialist Labor Party, the light-bearer and champion of the exploited workers, and of bewildered mankind generally, we do so in the knowledge that we have reared a monument as imperishable as brass, as enduring as granite, and as precious as the rubies of Samarkand.

\*

(Address of Eric Hass.)

There are political parties in America much older than the Socialist Labor Party in spite of our fifty years. They are not only old; they are senile. They have all the infirmities of old age, none of its compensating virtues. The parties I refer to are old not because of years but because the idea which gave them birth is shrivelled, and its miserable existence is prolonged by unnatural means. I refer to the parties of the past, of decadent capitalism.

Our Party, the Socialist Labor Party, is young in spite of its fifty years. It is young with the vigor and hopes and aspirations of youth. Our Party possesses this vitality because the idea which gave it birth throbs with life. Our Party is the Party of the Future, of Socialism.

We have no illusions about the campaign which lies ahead. It will be a grueling one. Bigotry is rampant. The tub-thumpers will do their level best to drown out the issue at home by diverting attention to the anarchy abroad. Yet, despite this formidable reaction, our task

has been rendered infinitely easier by the events of the past few years. There are several points which we need no longer argue at great length; they are self-evident.

In 1932 we were compelled to prove by Marxian logic that unemployment could not be solved within the framework of the capitalist system. Today ten or twelve million jobless workers are living proof of this contention.

In 1932 and 1936, and all the years between, we patiently demonstrated that intensified exploitation of wage labor, resulting in huge surpluses of unsold commodities, would lead to war between the great powers over the world markets and spheres of influence. Today the war in Europe is a horrible confirmation of our forecast.

For years, in the face of the most hostile reception, we have declared that reforms, New Deal or old deal, could not raise the working class out of the mire of insecurity and degradation. Today, after seven years of reform tinkering, more than a third of our people exist in squalor, while another third hangs onto the ragged edge.

We have argued earnestly, with fact and logic, to prove to the workers that an abundance is producible for everyone. Today there are few people so uninformed as to contend that we do not have the skill, resources and machinery with which to create a veritable cornucopia of plenty.

There are many other things which are self-evident today, but which required elaboration only four years ago. Many of our fellow workers already realize that the reason we cannot enjoy the abundance



producible is that today the means of production are privately owned and operated for profit. It is the task to which we have dedicated ourselves to convince others of this palpable fact and to show the American working class how they must organize to abolish the insane conditions of capitalism.

The Socialist Labor Party alone has a program for the peaceful and orderly Socialist reconstruction of society. We will, in this campaign, present this program to the American workers fearlessly and with compelling earnestness. The French writer, Victor Hugo, once said: "There is one thing that is stronger than armies, and that is an Idea whose time has come."

The time has come for Socialism! That is why, as we celebrate fifty years of tireless, unremitting labor for working class and human emancipation, we feel none of the weariness of parties which are spent.

We have confidence in the intelligence and manliness of the American workers. We know that when they realize the hopelessness of patching up an insane, outmoded social system, they will accept the revolutionary program of the Socialist Labor Party. It is our task to hasten that day that we may all greet the dawn of the Industrial Republic of Emancipated Labor.

#### XIV.

### Address of John W. Aiken

*Over Station WHN, New York City,  
April 28, 1940.*

On September 30, 1934, President Roosevelt said: "I stand or fall by my refusal to accept as a necessary

condition of our future a permanent army of unemployed."

Brave words, these, uttered apparently in the most blissful ignorance of the problem that faced him. However, be that as it may, the President will have to swallow his words, for sufficient time has elapsed to permit a judgment being made of his efforts. That verdict is that the President has failed to accomplish the noble task he had set himself—the solution of permanent unemployment.

It would be absurd to say, however, that his failure is due to a refusal to grapple with the problem. In the last seven years practically every conceivable effort has been made to restore prosperity. We have had, and continue to have, pump-priming projects on a grand scale costing billions of dollars, social security laws that did not, of course, bring security, and monetary and financial reforms. Unemployed youth to the extent of more than a quarter of a million have been taken from the streets and put into C.C.C. camps or other activities. All this and more. What else conceivably can be done?

Not even Mr. Dewey, Republican aspirant for the Presidential nomination, can find any new fields of reform. It is significant that he has expressed approval of the New Deal measures, and, in fact, urges their extension, though criticizing the red tape and inefficiency involved in the administration of these new laws.

Like the President on the aforementioned occasion, Mr. Dewey too refuses to accept unemployment as an insoluble problem. Said he in his recent Hollywood address:

"The American people are fa-

vored beyond any people in history. They are favored beyond any people on earth today. By what authority must we accept a verdict that we are finished—done—a people without a future? By what authority are ten million of our countrymen held in economic dependence and threatened with political subservience? By whose order are we denied the enjoyment of our national heritage? By whose order and authority exists this army of unemployed workers?"

The Socialist Labor Party answers: By the order and authority imposed upon society by a system which decrees that goods must be sold at a profit or not at all, a system which damns the masses to chronic poverty.

Even if Mr. Dewey knew this, the answer to his question, which apparently he does, would he dare repudiate this authority? We think not. Accordingly, were he elected and did he possess the unlimited power of a dictator, he too, like President Roosevelt, would go down to defeat before the magnitude of the task confronting him.

Certainly the outstanding fact of modern times is that we have at our disposal the means for producing an abundance. That the United States stands out above all other countries in this respect is equally true; for we are favored with a continent of vast and varied natural resources, have a large supply of skilled labor, and productive equipment which are the envy of the whole world.

But what good does all this do us? In the presence of vast wealth and the possibility of a most abundant life, widespread poverty and want exist among that very element which makes this abundance possible

—the working class of the land. Thus does the present social order reward its benefactors.

With blind and unthinking optimism, those who, like the President and Mr. Dewey, imagine that a solution of the unemployment problem can be found within the framework of the existing order, fail to take into account that the present state of affairs is an inevitable outcome of the development of capitalism. The country has seen a succession of economic crises, each one more devastating than the one before, culminating in the present crisis.

The invention and introduction of improved machinery, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the decline in purchasing power in relation to the increased volume of the goods produced creates the crises of unemployment and overproduction. When the market for commodities reaches the vanishing point, factories shut down or operate part-time and workers are thrown out on the streets to become dependent upon charity or government assistance. All because productive capacity exceeds the capacity to consume.

But the present crisis is not a temporary affair like those of the past. Previously no matter how serious the situation may have been, recovery was certain so soon as the commodities on the market were absorbed or destroyed. New industries arose or existing ones expanded and a large portion of workers was certain to return to work. Now, further market expansion is impossible and unemployment has become permanent, as is proved by the fact that a few months ago, when business activity had reached the level of the prosperous year of 1929, millions of



workers remained jobless. The indisputable fact is that markets of sufficient size to absorb the products of industry are not now available.

It is useless to inveigh against this condition while at the same time striving to maintain the very system that produces it. Equally ridiculous is it to believe that any legislative proposals can remedy it. Governments and political parties stand helpless before the economic forces unleashed in the world today and which will resist all efforts under capitalism to bring them under control.

If it be argued that some progress has been made toward recovery by the public spending orgy, it need only be pointed out in reply that the so-called revival has been only of a superficial and temporary nature, leaving the major problem unsolved. Meanwhile, the tremendous cost of producing the appearance of revival increases the public debt, bringing nearer the day of reckoning and catastrophe.

Can unemployment and the related economic problems be solved? Certainly! But not under capitalism. The means of production now privately owned must be socialized so that our productive ability may be turned to the benefit of society. Then and not until then will unemployment disappear. Capitalism throws workers out on the streets. Socialism would put them back to work by throwing out hours of labor, by reducing the length of the working day to a minimum consistent with the ability of industry to supply the needs of all.

This is the issue facing us: Either the message of the Socialist Labor

Party is accepted and the working class proceeds to establish production for use instead of for profit as today, or else the workers will have a ruthless dictatorship foisted upon them by the ruling class, in a final desperate endeavor to keep the capitalist system from complete collapse and revolution.

Make no mistake about it. Fascism is imminent. Now that another world war has broken out as a result of the mad race for markets and possession of raw materials, it may be expected that sinister influences will be brought to bear upon the policies of the United States designed to force this country into the conflict. The propaganda for the participation of the United States may be expected from two sources—first, from the exhausted Allies themselves; and, second, from the business elements of this country who already regard the cash and carry provisions of the Neutrality Act and the prohibition of loans to belligerents under the Johnson Act as barriers to large war profits. These barriers will be broken down or circumvented.

Besides, any number of incidents may arise which will be interpreted as a violation of the rights of the United States. Japan may decide to challenge the interests of the United States in the Pacific, or Germany may commit some act against American shipping or may carry the war on to this continent, either of which would be the pretext for direct involvement in the war. Unless fortified with a knowledge of the economic causes of war and organized strongly enough to prevent the participation of the United States, the working class will again fall a

victim to cunningly conceived war propaganda, and again become cannon fodder for the greater power and wealth of grasping imperialists.

The important point is that, regardless of which side wins, economic demoralization and financial bankruptcy lie at the end of the road. With hundreds of thousands of soldiers demobilized and jobless, the number of which would be augmented by those thrown out of work by the return of industry to a peacetime basis, and also by those losing their jobs due to the resumption of foreign trade by all belligerent countries, a resulting unemployment situation of such seriousness would be created as to constitute a menace to the continued existence of private property. Faced with extinction at the hands of the workers, the ruling class would resort to despotism to preserve its rule.

War most certainly means dictatorship, imposed either as a supposed war emergency measure or at the conclusion of peace. The workers will be the victims if they do not now organize to abolish war and capitalism.

Whether the working class falls under the iron heel of capitalist despotism or establishes a proper social order depends entirely upon whether the working class will heed the message of the Socialist Labor Party.

The immediate task of the working class is the formation of Socialist Industrial Unions whose primary purpose will be to take over the means of production when it is shown at the ballot box by the number of votes cast that the overwhelming portion of the population want this step to be taken. These

unions would then carry on the administration of industrial affairs.

It need scarcely be pointed out that the present unions are utterly worthless for the performance of those acts because they are dominated by the thoroughly reactionary and false conception that the interests of capital and labor are identical. And also because their efforts are devoted exclusively to futile attempts to improve the condition of labor under capitalism. Now unions must be built, actuated by Socialist ideas and based on the industrial rather than the craft form.

In addition to these, its reconstitutive and administrative functions, Socialist Industrial Unionism is the only intelligent and effective means for enforcing the fiat of the ballot should enforcement become necessary by reason of a refusal on the part of the ruling class to recognize the validity of a workers' political victory.

It will be observed that the program of the Socialist Labor Party calls for both political and economic action, one complementing the other. Taken together, they constitute an invulnerable means of accomplishing the defeat of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism.

Friends, at this fateful hour when war and reaction threaten to spread like a blighting pall over the whole world, and unemployment, with its corollaries of want, misery and constant insecurity, plagues the working class of the land, it is necessary that you seize time by the forelock and support with your voice and vote the Socialist Labor Party's program for social regeneration.



## XV.

### A Review and Outlook.

By Arnold Petersen.

A terrible year is ended, a year of unprecedented suffering and unbelievable wretchedness for the mass of humanity. At the risk of speaking in terms of hyperbole, one might say that never before in all recorded history has there been a year to equal it. Almost any one of the numerous important events that took place in the year of 1940 would have been sufficient to set off the year as an outstanding one in history. And the year 1940 is outstanding not merely because of what happened, but because the things that happened have created a situation which forever makes it impossible to go back to the politico-economic *status quo*—makes it impossible to go back to things as they were. Though unhappily the great issue of the age is not placed directly and clearly before us, nevertheless that issue is the one which, in one form or another, imperiously knocks on the gates of our age, the issue of slavery and poverty for the many, affluence and idleness for the parasitical few. Turn and twist it as they may, ruling class spokesmen cannot get around that issue. That the issue is not going to be settled by the ruling class in favor of freedom and a classless society, we know. The workers, properly organized, alone can and must do that job.

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The speech delivered by President Roosevelt December 29 strikes a

most ominous note. There can be no doubt that it is intended to create "public opinion," that is, to prepare the country for war. The President's address makes no sense unless we accept as Mr. Roosevelt's premise a recognition of the inevitability of war between the United States and the "Axis powers." The speech bristles with the sort of phrases and statements which marks it a call to battle. It is not necessary to question the President's integrity and high motives in order to challenge the complete validity of his "plea," or warning. The President wants to save "democracy" as his predecessor wanted to do twenty-four years ago. But let us not forget that to the President and his class "democracy" is an interchangeable term for capitalism, or, as they so euphoniously put it, the system of free enterprise. Hence we know that his "call to battle" means a call to the American workers to come to the rescue of the system, and the class, which exploit and despoil them. At any rate, that is precisely what his "call to battle" means. And that he is thinking primarily in international terms is shown by his bold declarations that the United States must stand by Great Britain, that is to say, United States capitalism must save British capitalism from destruction at the hands of its European and Asiatic competitors and rivals in the world market. This, and nothing else, is what the President's flowery language resolves itself into. To enable traditional capitalism to survive, to make it possible for "normal" capitalism to function a while longer (or forever, as the President fatuously seems to think possible!)—for this, Amer-

ican youth must die! For the President's assurances that no American army will be sent outside our borders mean nothing. The President undoubtedly meant sincerely what he said, but the logic of events, and not he, will determine that question. And once war is declared, it will soon be discovered that "our borders" are somewhere in the Low Countries, or in England, France, Scandinavia, or the Balkans! Modern warfare recognizes no artificial boundary lines, and the air, even less than the earth, acknowledges none. And so this ominous note struck by the President in the dying hours of the old year darkens an already overcast sky, and makes the immediate outlook appear even more dismal and portentous.

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Dark and dismal, however, as the dawn of the new year must appear to most of us, there are rays of hope and encouragement aplenty. We know, as said, that it is impossible to go back to the *status quo*. That leaves but two alternatives: Slavery, economic serfdom, for the masses under a system of absolutism—call it fascism, nazism, or industrial feudalism, it is all one. The other alternative is Socialism, and freedom in affluence for all. That we may lapse into industrial feudalism is not impossible. And in saying this we speak soberly. But, on the other hand, whenever in the past the world slipped back into a darker and more cruel period, there was always a sound reason for it: The fact of scarcity in the things needed to sustain and develop a civilized existence with equal opportunities for all to enjoy the good life. *This is an irrefutable fact, and a fact of basic importance.* Neither in natural nor

in social evolution do things happen capriciously, nor in a way that for any considerable length of time is contrary to the logic of things—contrary to the nature of things themselves. *This we know.* In society, as in nature, things have a way of seeking their own level, irresistibly and with overwhelming force, whatever may be the current and transitory obstacles. Moreover, man is no longer without conscious direction in social evolution. Man can, and generally *does*, take evolution by the hand and says: Along thy normal course I follow thee; and though there be artificial forces seeking to deflect thy course into byways, or backwards, I will resist and follow thee whithersoever thou ledest!

All history attests that thus are the processes of history worked out. The glory that was Greece, and the grandeur that was Rome, did not perish because of the evil designs of wicked and selfish men. They perished because the economic basis was lacking to push society further along those particular lines. The promise of the French Revolution was not violated because there arose fanatic dreamers on the one hand, or a Napoleonic man on horseback on the other hand. That promise was not fulfilled because as yet the material possibilities for the abundant life were absent. *We face no such situation today.* To imagine such an aftermath to the present social ferment and (as yet) incipient revolutionary upheavals, one has to imagine that mankind will perversely shut its eyes forever to palpable facts; that deliberately the mass of humanity will choose slavery and poverty, and go out of its way energetically to frustrate the designs of social evolu-



tion. Granted that sometimes it does seem as if that is precisely what humanity does, we know better, of course. Whatever momentary conquests the forces of reaction, the apostles of darkness, may make, they are of such a nature that they cannot possibly for long, not to say permanently, be consolidated. They bear within them the seeds of disintegration even if the workers should at first fail to organize and take over the management and direction of social and economic affairs.

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The last campaign disposed of more traditions than the silly "no third term" tradition. It disposed definitely of the legend that the two so-called major parties represented more than two suits of clothes for the same body politic, identical in all essentials. The presentation of a "Democrat" for the highest office in the land by the Republicans, and the avowed espousal of capitalist imperialism by a Democrat; the forming of "Republican" clubs for the election of a Democratic party candidate, and of "Democratic" clubs for the election of a Republican party candidate, for all time destroyed the fiction of a "two-party system" in America. Yet, despite all the humbuggery practised by the capitalist politicians, it became clear that the vast majority of the workers were indifferent, and simply voted for one or the other capitalist candidate because there did not seem to be anything else to do, barring abstaining from voting altogether. Had the real issue been presented, if the majority of the people had even been given the opportunity to vote on such a subordinate issue as conscription, there would have been a differ-

ent story to tell. So far as the revolutionary Socialist is concerned, there was nothing to do but to carry on, regardless of obstacles, and regardless of prospects, or the lack of prospects, of concrete results. And carry on the S.L.P. did! But that is another story. We are facing a new year, with new problems, new situations, though the fundamental issue remains the same. Only a fool would attempt to prophesy in detailed particulars at this stage, yet we venture to predict that the year 1941 will bring with it changes that will put 1940 in the shade. And that is saying something! The dawn of 1941 is as different from the dawn of 1940 as the year 1940 was different from 1860. It is altogether probable that the society of 1942 will be as fundamental in departure from pre-1939 days as the society of 1793 constituted a fundamental departure from pre-1789 days. Let us remember: *Nothing is certain; nothing is impossible.*

And so, on this dying day of the fated year of 1940 let us, one and all, solemnly resolve to increase our efforts and activities tenfold and a hundredfold! Let us plan carefully; let us execute our plans faithfully; let us view our duties toward the S.L.P. (that is, toward the working class) as we would view our personal duties to ourselves. Much depends upon the manner in which S. L.P. militants respond to the call of duty during 1941. The difference will be enormous in the end—it may easily mean the difference between a strongly integrated body and disintegration; the difference between success and failure; the difference between life and death. Let us, then, not merely highly *resolve*, but let us

also highly *perform*. For in the swamps between resolution and performance lie the "unhatched" germs of disaster and extinction.

The Socialist Labor Party, which for half a century has fought consistently for working class emancipation, looks forward to its 51st year with the same optimism, determination and faith in the working class which have been inseparable from its labors in the past. We are building the new social order in the minds and in the hearts of the workers of the land. Like so many bricks in the building, like so many thoughts and ideas in the minds of the workers. Brick upon brick, thought added to thought, and lo!, the building

is rising—the Socialist Republic is rearing skyward! Slow and arduous is the task, imperceptible almost the progress. Yet, the work proceeds ceaselessly, thought added to thought, bitter lesson linked unto bitter experience and a chain is forged stronger than the chain which held the fabled Fenris-wolf in check! Undismayed, with high hopes, unflinching courage and unsullied banner we recommence our labors in this new year, confident that deliverance is near. And our call to all militants is now as in the past:

S.L.P. MEN,  
DRAW CLOSE!

December 31, 1940.

## XVI

### The Socialist Labor Party Vote, 1892-1940.

(Compiled from official sources by Joseph C. Borden, Jr.)

Although the following table begins with 1892, with Simon Wing as the first Socialist Labor Party nominee for the Presidency, the records show that in the State of New York the Socialistic Labor Party was entered officially in the Presidential election of 1888, and a total of 2068 votes appear registered in the S.L.P. column. This is the earliest record found of a Presidential vote for the S.L.P. It was cast merely in the Socialistic Labor Party's column on the ballot, there being no member designated as candidate for President. [See "Official canvass for 1888. Vote for President." Page 634 of the Manual for the use of the Legislature of the State of New York, 1889. Prepared by Frederick Cook, Secretary of State, Albany, 1889.]



## The Socialist Labor Party Vote, 1892-1940

	1892	1896	1900	1904	1908	1912	1916	1920	1924	1928	1932	1936	1940
California .....		1611		*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*
Colorado .....		160	714	335	*	475			378	*	427	344	*
Connecticut .....	333	1223	908	575	608	1260	606	1491	1373	622	2287	1228	971
Georgia .....							*						
Illinois .....		1147	1373	4698	1680	4066	2488	3471	2334	1812	3638	1291	*
Indiana .....		324	663	1598	643	3130	1659	*	*	645	2070	*	706
Iowa .....		453	259				459	982	*	230		252	452
Kentucky .....			289	596	404	956	333	*	1499	340	1396	294	*
Maine .....									406		255	129	*
Maryland .....	*	588	388		*	322	756	1178	987	906	1036	1305	657
Massachusetts .....	649	2114	2599	2359	1011	1102	1097	3583	1668	772	2668	1305	1492
Michigan .....		293	903	1036	1096	1252	842	2539	5330	799	1401	600	795
Minnesota .....		954	1329	974		2212	468	5828	1855	1921	770	961	2553
Missouri .....		599	1294	1674	867	1778	901	1593	811	340	404	292	209
Montana .....			116	208									
Nebraska .....		186			*								
New Hampshire .....		228											
New Jersey .....	1337	3985	2074	2680	1196	1321	855	923	819	488	1054	349	446
New York .....	17956	17667	12622	9127	3877	4273	2666	4841	9928	4211	10339	*	*
Ohio .....		1165	1688	2633	721	2630	*	*	3025	1515	1968	*	*
Oregon .....								1515	917	1564	1730	500	2487
Pennsylvania .....	898	1683	2936	2211	1224	706	419	753	634	380	659	1424	1518
Rhode Island .....		558	1423	488	183	236	180	495	268	416	433	929	*
Texas .....			162	421	176	430							
Washington .....			866	1592	*	1872	730	1321	1004	4068	1009	362	667
Wisconsin .....		1314	503	249	318	632		*	458	381	494	557	1882
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>21173</b>	<b>36367</b>	<b>33382</b>	<b>33510</b>	<b>14029</b>	<b>29213</b>	<b>14670</b>	<b>30513</b>	<b>33883</b>	<b>21590</b>	<b>34038</b>	<b>12788</b>	<b>14883</b>

\* means that in the year and state indicated the Socialist Labor Party nominated a ticket, but that the ticket did not appear on the official ballot, and consequently that no votes were recorded for the S.L.P., with the following four exceptions, the only cases found where any "write-in votes" were officially recorded: Vermont 1924, 3 votes; California 1928, 6 votes; Ohio 1936, 14 votes; Ohio 1940, 31 votes.

In addition, it may be noted that Edward Stanwood's "History of the Presidency" (copyright 1898), page 517, credits the S.L.P. in the 1892

election with 336 votes in Maine and 27 votes in Maryland, but that search of the official records fails to verify these figures.

The following are the twenty-one states in which the Socialist Labor Party has never appeared on the official ballot: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming.

## Socialist Labor Party Candidates 1892-1940

### For President

1892	Simon Wing of Massachusetts	Charles H. Matchett of New York
1896	Charles H. Matchett of New York	Matthew Maguire of New Jersey
1900	Joseph F. Malloney of Massachusetts	Valentine Remmel of Pennsylvania
1904	Charles H. Corrigan of New York	William W. Cox of Illinois
1908	August Gillhaus of New York*	Donald L. Munro of Virginia
1912	Arthur E. Reimer of Massachusetts	August Gillhaus of New York
1916	Arthur E. Reimer of Massachusetts	Caleb Harrison of Illinois
1920	William W. Cox of Missouri	August Gillhaus of New York
1924	Frank T. Johns of Oregon	Verne L. Reynolds of Maryland
1928	Verne L. Reynolds of Michigan**	Jeremiah D. Crowley of New York
1932	Verne L. Reynolds of New York	John W. Aiken of Massachusetts
1936	John W. Aiken of Massachusetts	Emil F. Teichert of New York
1940	John W. Aiken of Massachusetts	Aaron M. Orange of New York

\*Nominee originally Morrie R. Preston.

\*\*Nominee originally Frank T. Johns, drowned while trying to rescue a child.



## APPENDIX B.

### Interference with, and Restrictions on, Civil Liberties, Political Rights (Ballot, Etc.).

(From the Report of the National Secretary to the National Executive Committee in Session, May, 1941.)

#### I.

The past year has witnessed an unprecedented degree of interference with the constitutional rights of citizens generally, both with respect to a flaunting of those rights guaranteed by law, as well as with respect to the placing on the statute books laws which (for want of a better word) may best be designated subversive—that is, subversive of the rights previously held secure under the Constitution, and subversive of the traditions derived and developed from the words and pronouncements of the Revolutionary Founders of the Republic, notably the Declaration of Independence. The means are the familiar ones: First, a taboo is declared on a certain theory or group, political or religious; thereupon such a group is declared un-American, or subversive, or (in keeping with current international trends), labelled “Fifth Columnist.” Assumptions or imputations, even though unfounded or deliberately invented, presently become facts so far as the official witch-hunters are concerned, and thereafter the hunt is on. The fact that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the group singled out may have every legitimate right to propagate its views—nay more, that it is its conscientious duty to do so—troubles the witch-

hunters and their misled followers not at all. In this respect we witness an almost exact parallel to the persecutions of the Abolitionists before the Civil War.

It is undoubtedly true that there are groups and individuals whose interests lie, not in the direction of serving the best interests of the majority of the American people, but rather the interests of some alien ruling class which may or may not be that of a dictatorship. And even there it would appear that there are distinctions to be made. Thus, the witch-hunters, the “patrioteers,” find it perfectly good Americanism to serve the interests of, say, the British imperialist class, while it is considered (and rightly so) to be “subversive” to serve the interests of the Italian, German or Russian dictators. No sensible person denies that foreign powers have their spies everywhere throughout the country. But it can also be safely asserted that the harm done by these is not nearly so great as that done by our own industrial autocrats, *their* spies and propagandists. It is also true that the double-dealing, underhanded and altogether contemptible anti-working class principles and tactics of the Communist party, for instance, have wrought great harm. Among other things, by reason of the Communist party’s poisonous, disruptive anti-Marxist propaganda, and also by reason of its tactics, the American ruling class has found it possible to create prejudice against all working class movements—even against conservative unions so-called, and against reactionary “union lead-

ers.” On the other hand, it would be folly to assume that the American plutocracy would not have found means to create hysteria, and to deny us our civil rights, if the Communists had not helped them. Of course they would, but they would not have had such easy sailing had it not been for the aid given them by their allies, the Communist party and kindred groups. As De Leon taught us, it is the business of the American Marxists to put the reaction on the defensive, and prove it in the wrong on every point, and not permit that reaction to put us on the defensive. To do so means to play right into their hands, thereby increasing our difficulties manifold. The service rendered the cause of capitalism in America by such groups as the Anarcho-Syndicalist I.W.W., the Anarcho-Communist Stalinists, and similar anti-Marxist groups is, indeed, incalculable.

The plotters against our constitutional rights are not in the main found in the so-called subversive groups, and certainly not among American Marxists. They are mainly to be found among the politicians in our legislative chambers, and in the various committees created by state and federal legislatures to investigate so-called un-American activities, and so forth. Typical of the lot is, of course, the Dies Committee which blithely proceeds in its own peculiar un-American way, scheming and working to hamstring our already heavily restricted political democracy. The example set by the Dies Committee inspires politicians in local and state legislatures and assemblies to create similar committees, so that in such states as Oklahoma and California, notably,

we witness the emergence of so-called “little Dies committees” which are as subversive of American traditions and constitutional guarantees as what might be called the parent body. Agitation is carried on in many states to put so-called “criminal syndicalism” laws on the statutes, and brazenly these agents of anti-American interests demand the enactment of anti-strike laws. The latter agitation particularly bears watching, for once such laws are enacted (on no matter what pretext) the end even of bourgeois democratic freedom will have come for America. We have even heard the savage and vicious cry from the halls of Congress that capital punishment should be meted out to workers who strike. And the vulgar politicians who set up that demand are those who on Lincoln’s birthday extol the great Emancipator—the American President who at New Haven, March 6, 1860, said: “I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers can strike when they want to, where they are not obliged to work under all circumstances, and are not tied down and obliged to labor whether you pay them or not!”

We are constantly harassed by the police in the matter of distributing, and particularly selling, our literature in public thoroughfares and squares, despite the celebrated decisions of the United States Supreme Court upholding our right to do so. As you now, we won the New Jersey case, a decision upholding our right to sell copies of the WEEKLY PEOPLE on the streets of Atlantic City being handed down on July 13, 1940, by the New Jersey Supreme Court. Yet in only a little more



than a month that same city flouted the decision of the Supreme Court of its own state by arresting three members (including Comrade Herder!) on the false and dishonest charge that they were littering the streets! And these vulgar politicians, who spit their own Supreme Court justices in the face, who trample their decisions under their filthy boots, have the brazenness to charge S.L.P. members with lack of respect for our Constitution and government! A case was reported in the *New York Times* a couple of weeks ago (April 8, 1941) involving the sect known as "Jehovah's Witnesses." Let us recall that the United States Supreme Court had specifically, in two memorable decisions, upheld the right of persons to distribute (and sell) literature on streets. This is the answer made to the Supreme Court decision by the mill-town of Manchester, N.H., and observe what the Supreme Court did about it:

"Jehovah's Witnesses' Lose.  
"Washington, April 7 (AP)—Thirteen persons describing themselves as 'Jehovah's Witnesses' failed today to obtain a Supreme Court review of a decision which upheld as constitutional a Manchester (N.H.) ordinance prohibiting the sale on public streets of newspapers, books, pamphlets or magazines without first obtaining a badge from the Superintendent of Schools. Appealing from a decision by the First Federal Circuit Court, they contended that the ordinance constituted 'prior censorship of the press,' and denied them their 'right of freedom of speech, press and of worship of Almighty God.'"

(It is subsequently reported under a Columbus, O., dateline of April 25, 1941, that Federal Judge Mell G. Underwood ruled that the Jehovah's Witnesses group had a constitutional right to distribute literature, etc., and granted a permanent injunction restraining the city of London, Ohio, from interfering.)

The august United States Supreme Court makes a ruling.

A municipality flouts that ruling and sets itself above the Supreme Court.

The victim carries an appeal to the United States Supreme Court "begging" it to order the rebelling municipality to respect and observe the ruling of the said august Supreme Court.

The said august body declines to do anything about it, thereby in effect certifying that its decisions may be contemned and violated with impunity!

Is it any wonder that Dickens's Mr. Bumble disgustedly exclaimed: "The law, sir, is a ass!"? But the law, under such circumstances, is, indeed, much worse than "a ass"—it becomes an instrument of despotism, of official anarchy, a breeder of lawlessness.

Among the many interferences with our civil rights I shall here deal briefly with some of the most representative ones, listing them by states:

#### *California.*

On June 28, 1940, the organizer of Section Oakland informed the National Office that comrades selling Party literature had been stopped because they did not have a permit. The matter was referred to the S.E.C., which advised the Sec-

tion to continue to distribute and sell literature in Oakland with a view of making a test case, if necessary. There was no report of further interference.

In Stockton a rule was enforced to close open air meetings at 9.30 p.m., obviously in an effort to discourage or discontinue meetings altogether.

Section Los Angeles reported the arrest of Comrades Harold Holzgreen and Nathan Goldberg, on April 8, 1941, for distributing leaflets on the streets of the city of Vernon. The two comrades were held in jail for several hours until \$200 bail could be raised. It is reported that the prosecuting attorney agreed to drop the charge, it apparently being realized that under the Supreme Court decisions the municipality would have no case at all. The organizer of Section Los Angeles reported that the attorney agreed to drop the charge also "in view of the far-reaching complications should the City of Vernon insist on ignoring the Constitution and the Bill of Rights." The case was to come up in court on April 18.

#### *Connecticut.*

In Bridgeport, on May 13, 1940, our members were prevented from selling the WEEKLY PEOPLE at an open air meeting. A complaint was immediately filed by the Section; assurances were given by the Chief of Police that there would be no interference—the "aim of the Department was to cooperate with us"!

On June 14, 1940, our Presidential candidate was scheduled to address a meeting in Hartford. A mob was incited to disrupt the meeting

and, when called upon to protect it, the police refused to do so. A similar incident took place on June 19, also in Hartford, at a meeting scheduled for Comrade George E. Bopp. Although promises had been made to protect this meeting after protests had been filed in connection with the disrupted Aiken meeting, nothing was done by the police to prevent the mob from disrupting Comrade Bopp's meeting. When Comrade Bopp appealed to the police to maintain order, he was promptly told that the hoodlums had as much right to free speech as the S.L.P. had. The meeting was, therefore, adjourned, to avoid further trouble.

#### *Washington, D.C.*

On May 25, 1940, in the nation's capital, an individual wearing an American Legion button assaulted Comrade A. A. Albaugh, who was on a speaker's stand at the time. Comrade Albaugh had the assailant arrested for assault and destruction of property. When the case came before the court, the judge proceeded to question and lecture Comrade Albaugh, but since the assailant could not deny his conduct, the judge found it necessary to impose a fine of \$25 for destruction of property (apparently the assault on Comrade Albaugh was inconsequential!), whereupon the sentence was suspended. The National Office filed a complaint subsequently with the Department of Justice, and also protested this in a letter to the President of the United States, without anything, however, being done about it.

#### *Illinois.*

In this state our members were



victims of mob action to a greater extent than in any other state. The outstanding instance was that of the assault on Comrade Joseph Pirincin in Peoria on June 6. The details are familiar to you, as they were published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE, issue of June 22, 1940.

The other cases of interference in Illinois relate mostly to the collection of signatures and will be dealt with under a separate head.

#### *Indiana.*

On Saturday, February 15, this year, Comrade Joe Wegner, a member of Section Evansville, was arrested in a restaurant at the behest of the drunken proprietress, who made several false charges against Comrade Wegner, such as that he had said "God damn America," "that he was a Communist and foreigner," etc., etc. Comrade Wegner, wholly innocent of any wrongdoing, and keeping calm while the drunken tavern-keeper vilified him, was taken to the Evansville city jail and placed in a cell, where he was held incommunicado for about 24 hours, his wife finally being permitted to see him. On Monday morning he was taken to the finger-print room, measured, weighed, finger-printed, and a number hung around his neck while being photographed. He was then released without any charge being placed against him. A complaint has been filed with the mayor of the city of Evansville. A month having passed without any action having been taken by the mayor, steps will now be taken to sue the arresting officers for false arrest, and to collect what damages may be possible. It should be noted that this incident is of recent occurrence,

and undoubtedly one of the most outrageous assaults on the person and rights of a member of the Socialist Labor Party to date, at least at the hands of the police itself. The matter will be followed through to the end by the National Office as far as that is possible.

#### *Maine.*

In Portland, on November 16, 1940, Comrade Aiken was distributing handbills advertising a scheduled meeting, when the police interfered. Subsequently a protest was lodged with the Portland City Manager, who informed us that the police department had been ordered not to interfere with S.L.P. members distributing leaflets.

#### *Massachusetts.*

In Springfield our right to sell and distribute literature on the streets was challenged by the authorities. The local ordinances obviously fly in the face of the United States Supreme Court decisions, but, due to previous doubts that had been raised as to whether or not the Supreme Court decisions also included the sale, as well as distribution, of free literature (see correspondence with Indianapolis authorities in report to the National Convention), and due to the fact that the Atlantic City case was still pending, and generally for lack of time, nothing further was done in this particular instance by the National Office. It might be added parenthetically that there are several such cases still pending, concerning which nothing conclusive has been done. Obviously the Party cannot fight every municipality in the nation on this issue, but, when we do make an issue of

it, we should be prepared to carry the case, wherever it may originate, to the United States Supreme Court.

#### *New Jersey.*

On June 10, 1940, Comrade George E. Bopp reported that a mob in Paterson pulled him off the stand, destroyed the banner and scattered his notes. Although the audience supported Comrade Bopp against the mobsters, the police stood by, refusing to interfere unless formal charges were preferred against them by Comrade Bopp.

On June 29, 1940, our members were stopped from distributing campaign leaflets in the town of Vineland. When our members called the attention of the police to the Supreme Court rulings, the police chief replied that he was not interested in Supreme Court rulings. On August 29 our state secretary protested to Governor Moore against this unlawful interference by the police in Vineland. One of the local papers falsely reported the S.L.P. in this connection, and related circumstances, and when our organizer, Comrade Karp, wrote a letter to the editor correcting him and protesting the falsehoods, no attention was paid to the protest. It seemed obvious that the editor of this sheet was in cahoots with the police with regard to their unconstitutional action.

In June of last year the authorities in West New York, N.J., interfered with our arranging outdoor meetings in that city. The matter was referred to the S.E.C. for action, which immediately took the matter up with the West New York authorities. A permit was granted for the holding of a meeting at the

corner and time requested. Subsequently, however, permit was refused the Section for another meeting in West New York, but since by this time no speaker was available to back up the request for a future meeting, the matter was permitted to drop.

As reported in the WEEKLY PEOPLE (August 3, 1940) the Party won the appeal in the New Jersey Supreme Court against the decision of the city of Atlantic City, which found Comrade Milton Herder guilty of violation of a local ordinance, requiring a permit to sell literature on the streets. The decision, declaring the local ordinance unconstitutional, was handed down by the New Jersey Supreme Court on July 13, 1940. The issue, accordingly, was settled in the state of New Jersey.

However, on August 22, 1940, Comrades Olkes, Herder and Israel were arrested for distributing leaflets in Atlantic City, on the ground that they were littering the streets. After a prolonged delay, for which the local court was responsible, the case against these three comrades was finally dismissed, the Recorder informing our attorney in Atlantic City to this effect on December 27, 1940. On advice of our national attorney, Mr. Byrne, the question of suing the arresting officers for false arrest was taken up with the Atlantic City attorney, who handled the case for us. This attorney, however, informed us in so many words that he was afraid to handle a case involving suit for arrest against the city authorities. Attempts to reason with him, and to remind him of his duties and responsibilities as an attorney, were of no avail. This law-



yer was afraid that the politicians and their gangsters would do something or other to members of his family, and that ended the incident.

#### *New York.*

Several times our members in New York City were interfered with by the police while distributing leaflets, etc. Complaints were made to the New York Police Department, which made a show of rebuking the officers, and gave us to understand that there would be no further interference by the police.

In June, 1940, the Greater New York Propaganda Committee reported to the National Office that the police had interfered with the taking up of a collection at a street meeting, the police insisting that no collections could be taken up without a permit. Again on September 10, at an outdoor meeting, the police prevented the taking up of a collection. The matter was referred to our attorney for investigation. As yet no definite conclusions have been reached with regard to our right to take up collections at open air meetings.

On May 25, 1940, Comrade Fred Kingsland, member of Section Erie County, was arrested in Buffalo for selling literature without a permit. Through the aid of a local attorney, who handled the case for us free of charge, the case was dismissed on May 28. This was the second case which this attorney handled successfully for us, without charging any legal fees for his services "in the cause of freedom."

#### *Ohio.*

Last August Section Youngstown made efforts to secure the public

park for a meeting in Niles to be addressed by our Vice Presidential candidate. The mayor refused to allow the park to be used for the meeting, unless a written copy of the speech was first submitted to him for approval. As time was lacking to go into it for the sake of the general principle involved, nothing further was done, and the Section arranged for a meeting on that date in another town.

In Lorain the authorities interfered with the sale of literature in the streets, but for the reason mentioned in the case of Springfield, Mass., nothing further has been done in the matter.

#### *Oregon.*

On August 21, 1940, Comrade Aiken complained that a local recruiting sergeant attempted to break up his meeting with the aid of hoodlums recruited for the purpose. The authorities had previously interfered with the sale and distribution of literature on the streets, under the provisions of a local ordinance. As we have no Section in Klamath Falls, and there being no more meetings or other activities scheduled there, nothing further was done in the matter.

#### *Pennsylvania.*

On May 17 and 24, Section Philadelphia reported the mobbing of meetings on these two dates. In the one case the hoodlums seized the speaker's stand and smashed it. The police made no effort to apprehend the culprits and, of course, that particular meeting was discontinued. At the other meeting, when the speaker protested at the interference by the mob, the only satisfaction he got

from the officer in attendance was that "they had a right to speak"—meaning the hoodlums! Protest was filed with the police, but apparently no satisfaction was given.

In May of last year Section Dauphin County reported that the Harrisburg Police Department had refused to grant permission to the S. L.P. to hold a meeting in Harrisburg, and threatened anyone with arrest who would attempt to hold a meeting. Later, when a verbal permit was granted to hold a meeting in Harrisburg, it was found that the location assigned was on a dark side street. Since the Chief of Police could not be contacted on this occasion, and as no meeting could be held in the location assigned, further efforts to hold the meeting were abandoned.

On October 4, Comrade Bopp's meeting in Harrisburg was disturbed by a group of hecklers. When approached to be quiet, one member of the group was heard to say: "Don't be afraid; the cop said he would be back of us." The officer at the meeting was appealed to to keep order. His reply was: "They [the hecklers], too, have a right to free speech." The meeting was abandoned.

A meeting had been scheduled for Comrade Quinn in Luzerne in June, 1940, but the police refused to permit the meeting to go on. Complaint to the Burgess in person was of no avail—he frankly refused to grant permission to hold a meeting. Comrade Quinn wrote a letter to the editor of the local paper, and endeavored to have them print it, but did not succeed.

On September 20 Comrade George E. Bopp was arrested in Wilkes-

Barre for addressing a meeting without a written permit. It was established that the Chief of Police himself had given verbal permission to hold the meeting. Comrade Bopp was arrested and held for two hours. He was subsequently released on bail, and the next day Comrade Bopp pleaded his own case. Finally the Chief was contacted, and it is reported that he ordered the court clerk to give "back his money [to Comrade Bopp] and let him go." The question was considered as to whether to sue for false arrest, but subsequently the matter was dropped.

In West Homestead we had trouble on two occasions. In this feudal stronghold the authorities went so far as to prohibit indoor meetings. When protests were repeatedly made against this decision, the only answer given us was that the people of West Homestead did not want the S.L.P. there. The Pennsylvania S.E.C. had made plans to follow up this matter, but apparently it was not brought to any definite conclusion. The difficulty in a place of this kind is that the hall owners are intimidated by the police and will refuse to rent their halls if they think the police will give them trouble afterward. This entirely apart from the actual physical interference by the police itself.

On August 21, at a street meeting in Pittsburgh, where about 500 people had gathered to hear Comrade Orange, several drunks and "a typical 200 per cent American" disrupted the meeting. The latter finally rushed the stand, pulling Comrade Orange off, tearing his shirt sleeve off. Before police assistance arrived, our comrades present man-



aged to keep the crowd under control. When the police finally did arrive, the ringleader had fled. Comrade Orange again mounted the stand and resumed his lecture. The crowd which had increased to about 1,000 persons showed its appreciation by spontaneous applause at the conclusion of Comrade Orange's talk, and, in the opinion of those present who reported the incident to the National Office, "the Party won the respect of all the decent elements in attendance, and no doubt many friends."

#### Utah.

Our staunch member-at-large, Comrade Thomas Ballantyne, who single-handedly carries on S.L.P. agitation in his locality, reported that in the city of Logan he was stopped while distributing leaflets on the streets. After making formal protest and arguing the matter with the authorities, the City Attorney of Logan acknowledged his right to distribute leaflets. As far as we know, he has met with no further interference.

#### Wisconsin.

In Merrill considerable interference was experienced with regard to holding meetings, etc., the details of which were reported in the WEEKLY PEOPLE of July 6, 1940.

On February 12 this year Comrade Harvey Pattee, a member of Section Milwaukee, was arrested in front of the Public Auditorium in Milwaukee while distributing literature. On February 13 Comrade Pattee was tried and it was reported to the National Office that the case was dismissed, but the judge, after a hurried

consultation with the opposing attorney, changed the decision and imposed a suspended sentence, apparently in order to preclude an appeal, which, if sustained, would enable us to sue for false arrest. The case is now in a legal wrangle, and it is reported that it may not be called in court again until the middle of May.

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As stated before, these are only some of the cases of interference during the last twelve months or so and are cited chiefly as samples, except for a few which are included particularly because of their importance. Our organizers and candidates on the road during the campaign reported from time to time on interference at their public meetings by hoodlums and gangster elements, but in most instances order was maintained and the meetings carried through to proper conclusions.

The other cases of interference, both by police and by the mob, will be dealt with briefly under the head of interference with gathering signatures, etc.

## II.

(A) *Alien Registration Law*: This reactionary measure became law when President Roosevelt signed it on June 29, 1940. (Some day somebody will compile a record of the reactionary laws initiated, encouraged and signed by the "Great Humanitarian," both those obviously reactionary, as well as those which came wrapped in the transparent cellophane of "benevolent despotism.") Ostensibly directed at aliens who might be acting as agents of a foreign government, or who on their own account would plot against the United States government, etc., its

effect has been chiefly that of intimidating all aliens who honestly and sincerely exercised the rights they would acquire, and practised the duties which eventual citizenship would demand of them. Even some of our foreign-born members seem to have allowed themselves to become intimidated, but the chief injury this bill has worked on the Party (as noted also in the reports of the Language Federations) is the fact that it has frightened many of those outside our ranks who in the past supported the Party liberally, in one way or another. And whatever may have been the announced purpose of the measure, there can be no doubt that those who sponsored it knew what a powerful weapon it would prove in dealing with honest and sincere "radicals"—particularly Socialists, of course. It is one more instance of the underhanded way in which the political party in power wields that power against rivals, actual or potential. It may, however, prove a two-edged sword, like so many other similar acts. For it is not impossible that thousands upon thousands of aliens, in their bitter resentment, may turn away from the old corrupt parties and give their support to the Marxian Socialist Labor Party.

(B) *The Voorhis Act*: This equally reactionary measure has already been touched upon in this report. Its chief provisions make it mandatory for an organization with affiliations abroad to submit to the government its membership list and other data. Of course, it does not apply to the S.L.P. at this time, but while on the statute books it will prevent the S.L.P. from being a member of a Socialist International, unless, of course,

we should choose to turn our membership list, etc., over to the government. The law in any case is simply one more sample of the cunning and unscrupulousness of the rising reaction.

(C) *The Hatch Law*: While this is no longer a new law, the year that has passed since its enactment has thoroughly demonstrated its reactionary character. Increasingly it appears to be used to ferret out those who may not yet be known to be "radicals," or to intimidate (and generally as to injury in their chances to make a living) those who are known to be "radicals." Now and then the National Office receives from members working on defense projects, or other governmental undertakings, request for advice as to how to answer the question: "Do you advocate the overthrow of the government (or the Constitution) of the United States?" We have answered, and shall continue to answer, such inquiries, that, since it is now known that those who interpret and apply the law imply *violent* overthrow, and since no S.L.P. man advocates the violent overthrow of capitalism, or of anything else, our members should answer such questions put to them with an emphatic NO—that is, that they do *not* advocate the overthrow, etc., etc.

## III—THE BALLOT.

The story of our trouble last summer regarding our attempts to qualify on the ballot in the various states is a long and dismal one. Looking back on the long, weary and costly struggle, it all seems like some fantastic dream, or rather nightmare. Wearisome as the struggle was, the recital of its details will likely prove



even more wearisome. Yet it appears to be necessary to record the essential facts and incidents, and this will be done as briefly as possible.

*California.* No attempt was made to get on the ballot, the requirements of approximately 269,000 signatures to place a minority party's ticket on the ballot making the attempt utterly prohibitive.

*Colorado.* In the state of Colorado only 500 signatures were required to place the Party's ticket on the ballot. Unfortunately, however, our members were so situated that none of them could take an active, that is, open part in collecting signatures. In the case of the most active members, it would have meant their livelihood to act openly in behalf of the Party in this respect. Accordingly, our Section contacted a gentleman who was supposed to be an expert signature-collector, he himself running for office, expecting to qualify by collecting signatures for himself. Early in the campaign I expressed doubt to Section Denver that we could depend very much upon this gentleman. Unfortunately my pessimism was sustained by the course of events. The Section's relation to this politician was, of course, a business relation pure and simple, and all he was expected to do was to secure the required number of signatures for the S.L.P. in a legitimate, that is, legal and open and above-board manner. Despite all his promises to secure the signatures for us (at so much per signature, of course), he failed the Section (although he secured 7,000 signatures for himself), and so in the end we did not qualify on the ballot in Colorado. While this is not

exactly a case of interference by the authorities, or of excessive restriction, it seems to belong in this general recital of our difficulties to get on the ballot.

*Illinois.* In this state we made the effort to get on the ballot but failed. It was in Illinois that we encountered the greatest difficulties and where our signature-gathering comrades were subjected to the greatest annoyance, and in some cases physical assault.

On June 2 in Belvidere the police stopped four of our Rockford comrades from gathering signatures on the ground that they were creating a "nuisance" on a Sunday.

On June 26 in De Kalb five of our comrades were gathering signatures when they were accosted by a policeman who stated that the mayor wanted to see them. Our five comrades went to the mayor's office where they were told that De Kalb was a peaceful community with a limited police force, and that the mayor could not guarantee protection against mob violence. (Note the contradiction: It was a peaceful community, but mob violence apparently was the natural thing to be expected!) Our comrades reported that there was nothing to indicate a hostile attitude on the part of the population of the town, nevertheless under the circumstances it was felt that it was best to leave the town. The Illinois S.E.C. on June 29 sent a letter of protest to the mayor.

On July 2, in Bloomington, five S.L.P. signature-gatherers were "rounded up" and taken to a police station in a squad car. They were ordered to get out of town by the police chief. When the latter was asked whether, on assuming office,

he did not swear to uphold the Constitution, he replied: "Never mind what I swore to, and never mind the Constitution; I am giving you fair warning! . . ."

On July 5 a group of S.L.P. signature-gatherers were threatened and harassed by a gang of organized hoodlums. Our members were brought down to the police station, where they were told that the city authorities could not be responsible for their safety, and they were advised to leave town.

On July 6 three of our comrades were gathering signatures in Danville, when they were picked up by the police and questioned, and thereupon ordered to leave town.

On July 23, in the town of Morris, four members, overhearing threatening remarks made by loiterers, decided to go to the state attorney's office to make sure that they would be able to do their legitimate work unmolested. The attorney, however, was not in. Thereupon they went to the sheriff's office, and there they were told that the office could not tell them whether or not they could gather signatures, but it was suggested to them that they had better not try for the sake of their own safety. When our comrades returned to the street to continue signature-gathering, the threats were repeated, and increasingly so. When the matter was reported to the police chief, he replied that the gathering of signatures in a given community should be done by Party members in that community. Our comrades thereupon left.

On August 1 Comrade A. E. Fortman, of Section Milwaukee, whose assistance for signature-gathering in Illinois had been secured,

was in Bloomington to collect signatures. While waiting for someone whom he had secured to assist him in the work, he was forced into a car by four men. He was driven around for several hours while the kidnappers threatened him. One had a blackjack and a gun. Comrade Fortman was finally released, but he was warned not to return to Bloomington unless he wanted to incur the risk of being tarred and feathered.

On August 1 Comrade Pirincin and a group of signature-gatherers found themselves in Galesburg. In order to avoid unnecessary trouble, Comrade Pirincin notified the authorities that he and the other comrades were in town to collect signatures. He was told by the police chief that he had better keep moving. Thereupon he was promptly surrounded by police officers, one of whom wanted to see a petition list. One of the officers snatched all the lists from Comrade Pirincin. All attempts to reason with these official gangsters failed. After conferring with our state secretary, Comrade Frank Schnur, Comrade Pirincin and the others left town.

On August 2 two of our comrades were in Havana collecting signatures and were picked up by the police and taken to the police station. Here a disgraceful incident took place, the state's attorney, one Lyle Wheeler, openly aligning himself with the mob elements (the dominant ones apparently being of the broadcloth variety), and after questioning our comrades, the said Lyle Wheeler, state's attorney, ordered them to "get out of town." Thus, law and order and democratic procedure were upheld in Havana!

It should be added here that it



was absolutely necessary for our comrades in Illinois to visit these small towns in Illinois for the reason that the law requires that 200 signatures must be collected in each of 50 counties, besides an additional 15,000 which can be obtained in any one county. Hence it was, of course, not altogether choice which brought our comrades to these small towns, nor could they simply choose to leave these small towns alone and concentrate in places where the population was larger, and where the difficulties in collecting signatures were not so great.

The National Office received reports regularly of these outrageous interferences with the constitutional rights of citizens, and promptly on each occasion (or when a few had accumulated), a letter was directed to the Department of Justice at Washington. Many regrets were received from the Department of Justice, both as regards the treatment accorded our members, and also because (allegedly) the Department of Justice, alas, was unable to do anything in these matters unless it was shown that certain Federal election provisions were involved. In other words, the Department of Justice asserted that, no matter how flagrant the violations were, they could do nothing if they concerned primarily state laws and state authorities. When it was pointed out to the Department of Justice that the particular federal law, which the Department itself had cited as being possibly involved, as a matter of fact had been violated by the state authorities, since the gathering of signatures to insure a place on the ballot of our Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates (these being

federal offices) involved a federal election, additional regrets and alibis and endless talk-talk were offered by the Department of Justice, and there it invariably ended. A huge stack of correspondence that passed between the National Office and the Department of Justice at Washington testifies to the efforts made by the National Office to prevail upon the Department of Justice to do that which supposedly the facts and the law required the Department to do.

During the same period the Illinois S.E.C. had been sending protests to the state's attorney general, and to the governor of the state, but all without avail.

When it finally became clear that it was a physical impossibility to gather the required number of signatures, the Party meanwhile spending a great deal of money on those that were collected, it was decided that to continue would prove an utter waste of funds and energy, apart from the risk incurred by our members by exposing themselves to continued mob action. Upon advice of the National Office, accordingly, the Illinois S.E.C. discontinued the collection of signatures, and filed the number already collected (close to 9,000 signatures, out of the 25,000 required), together with a formal statement in which the S.E.C. declared that it was filing these signatures knowing that the required number was not obtained, but that this fact was "due entirely to the interference with our legal rights to collect signatures in certain Illinois towns," interference manifested either through "unashamed exercise of violence by the officials in these towns, or threats of violence, or by open collusion between town officials

and mob leaders."

It may be added here that the National and State Offices also appealed to the American Civil Liberties Union for assistance, but as has usually been our experience with this organization, no assistance worth while was given us.

*Massachusetts.* On August 14 the Massachusetts State Ballot Law Commission ruled four "independent parties" off the ballot, including the S.L.P., because all allegedly had failed to hold party caucuses prior to picking candidates, and, further, because of their alleged failure to check to determine whether delegates to their conventions were registered voters. A hearing was called by the Commission. The Commission, however, erred in calling the hearing in that it failed to notify of the time and place of the hearing by mail, as provided by law, all candidates and committees affected. It notified only the recording secretary and presiding officers of the convention. On the basis of these defects court action was taken against the ballot commission. On September 17, the Party's attorney in Massachusetts advised that "all of the candidates of the Socialist Labor Party, as well as the candidates of the other minority parties, have been restored to the ballot ... by order of the Superior Court."

Accordingly, we qualified on the ballot in Massachusetts.

*Michigan.* In the state of Michigan, although it was a hard job to secure the signatures, we qualified and appeared on the ballot. The politicians, and particularly the Detroit capitalist press, conducted a vicious campaign, agitating for increased restrictions with regard to minority parties qualifying for a

place on the ballot in the state. We may expect increased difficulties, then, in the state of Michigan.

*New York.* In this state we experienced considerable difficulties in connection with signature-gathering. In several places (around New York City, as well as up-state) our members were interfered with in their legitimate task of collecting signatures. Finally the New York S.E.C. sent a letter of protest to the attorney general of New York, Mr. John J. Bennett, Jr., which resulted in the attorney general writing a formal letter declaring this interference illegal, and cautioning authorities not to interfere with the signature-gathering of the S.L.P. A facsimile copy of the attorney general's letter was printed and distributed among our signature-gatherers, and also reprinted in the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

*Ohio.* In this state we likewise failed to qualify on the ballot. The causes were, in the first place, the huge number of signatures that had to be collected, the total, including the margin thought necessary, exceeding 30,000. Secondly, the same atmosphere prevailed in Ohio as was found in Illinois, except that there was less actual interference by mobs and authorities. However, due to the increasing war hysteria, it was found extremely difficult to get qualified citizens to sign our petitions. Moreover, in Ohio certain election provisions involving registered voters increased our difficulties in securing bona fide signatures tremendously. For all practical purposes it was entirely within the power of the local election bureaus to decide whether or not certain petitions should be accepted. Theoretically we could, of course, check the rulings



of each local board, but obviously neither time nor our funds would have permitted of going through with this to an extent that would have made it possible for us to prove either errors or dishonesty in a sufficient degree to enable us to present the required minimum number of signatures.

We collected more signatures than we needed to get on the ballot in Ohio, but the number rejected was so great as to place us considerably below the required minimum, thereby causing the rejection of our petitions.

*Rhode Island.* Despite many and persistent efforts, we failed to appear on the ballot in Rhode Island. Although comrades from Massachusetts were engaged to assist in this task, many of them volunteering their services, we still could not secure the 500 required. As a matter of actual fact, we collected nearly twice the actual number required. The situation in Rhode Island, however, is such as to make it almost impossible to present a list of qualified signatures, for the reason that local election boards (apparently unscrupulously) rejected the names of signers wholesale. In at least two or three instances we were informed that those who had signed petitions, and who were qualified to sign, had had their signatures rejected. However, due to the expense involved, and the difficulty of proving our contention, it was impossible within the time allotted to secure the required minimum, or to carry on any contest that might have resulted in placing our ticket on the ballot.

\*

Apart from our own more or less incidental errors and negligence with

regard to getting on the ballot, and apart also from the interference suffered by mobs and mob-friendly political office-holders, it is clear that overwhelmingly our difficulties result from the reactionary election laws in most states. We know that the politicians are forever seeking ways and means of making these laws even more restrictive, to make it increasingly difficult, and at last impossible for a minority "radical" party to place its ticket on the ballot. Generally, the politicians operate under cover of seeking to "protect" the country against Nazi, Fascist and Communist groups—groups actually or supposedly advocating physical force and violence in effecting changes in social and economic relations. We know also that the politicians and their plutocratic masters are insincere in their great concern to observe peaceful procedure, since there has never been a ruling class more violent, more brutal, and with less regard for human lives and peaceful relations, than the capitalist class, proof of which abounds on every hand, both on the domestic as well as the international field. Every time another city is bombed, every time another ship is deliberately sent to the bottom of the sea, every time this or that army division is slaughtered, every time the police clubs or shoots striking workers into submission, the echo of the question addressed to Socialists and workers generally: "Do you advocate physical force and violence?" resounds in all its cynicism and hypocrisy.

Nevertheless, as usual, the Communists and others, past and present, who have advocated and advocate violence, etc., serve as aids and

allies to the reaction in clamping down the lid still tighter on our civil rights, and on the democratic prerogatives supposedly the birthright of Americans. Thus, by ostensibly moving to deny Communists a place on the ballot, the capitalist class is simply skilfully making use of their Communist allies in order to execute a flank attack on the constitutional rights of citizens generally, and specifically to deny these to the Marxian Socialists who cannot be successfully dealt with without the reactionaries' discarding *all* pretenses of adhering to democratic and constitutional procedure. This is not to say that all 2x4 politicians in local, state or national assemblies are such clever and cunning Machiavellians—not at all. These petty errand-boys of the plutocracy undoubtedly believe that the Communists, etc., constitute a menace to "our cherished institutions," and the rest of the bourgeois litany about which they so robot-like chant. These petty politicians do as they are told, though sometimes in their zeal to aid their economic masters they go so far that the masters have to put the check-rein on them. But the simple fact remains that the plutocracy moves stealthily behind the shield of the alleged Communist menace, and thereby accomplishes their reactionary purposes with far greater ease (and apparent patriotism) than otherwise would be the case.

Recently there have been several instances of such flank attacks on constitutional rights, in the manner so well described by Thomas Jefferson when he warned against Supreme Court encroachments—"working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little today and a little tomorrow,

and advancing its noiseless step, like a thief. . . ." In the New York *Times* of February 4, 1941, the editor commented on several bills being promoted at Albany designed to bar so-called Communists from office, and to bar the Communist party and similar parties from the ballot. Applying here the plutocratic check-rein on overzealous errand-boys, the *Times* editorial says about the proposed laws: "We do not have to guess what their effect would be if passed. They would not convert any convinced Communist or Nazi. They would, on the other hand, give the Communist and Nazi groups a chance to pose as martyrs." What the *Times* fails to add—and most importantly—is that these and similar bills would be turned against the Marxian Socialists in order to prevent, if that were possible, the message of proletarian emancipation from reaching the workers.

A few weeks ago the ultra-reactionary state assembly at Trenton passed a bill barring the Communist party from the ballot in New Jersey. At the time of writing it has not been signed by the governor, and it is thought likely that Governor Edison may veto it. During the discussion, one of the senators, a one-time alien, Herbert J. Pascoe, pluto-gogued as follows:

"I am a naturalized citizen [born in Brazil] and therefore one by choice and not by birth. I am proud of that, and I say we need more, Nathan Hales in this country and fewer Benedict Arnolds. . . . Are we going to stand here and fail to move to perpetuate our government?"

This ex-alien seems to overlook the fact that his language is the reactionary language of the Tory sup-



porters of the British Crown who took the traitor Benedict Arnold to their bosoms. The notion that our government should be forever perpetuated is as violently in conflict with the Declaration of Independence, and it is as alien to our revolutionary traditions, as the Brazilian-born Pascoe is alien to American soil. May we not, then, turn against this super-patriot the poisoned arrow so frequently shot by his kind at the Marxian Socialists: "If you don't like our revolutionary traditions, why don't you go back where you came from?"

Elsewhere the legislative mills are grinding out similar reactionary laws, often without public discussion, and without the average person's knowing anything about their having been passed. It is vitally important that we exercise the greatest vigilance, that our state committees and local election committees follow these matters closely, remaining alert and ever watchful.

The National Office has, among other things, been conferring with the American Civil Liberties Union, which has lately taken the initiative in having uniform election laws adopted which would make it possible for minority parties to place their tickets on the ballot. I cannot say that I am much encouraged at the results, or particularly impressed with the American Civil Liberties Union's understanding of the problem as to what can or should be done. Nevertheless, we have cooperated with the Union, conditioning our cooperation on the understanding that we would go with them as far as we could without compromising our principles and tactics. On December 28 we submitted our sugges-

tions for a so-called Model Election Law, the chief "plank" of which was that the percentage of signatures needed to place a ticket on the ballot by petition should not exceed one-tenth of one per cent of the state's population, this being approximately the percentage now required in New York state, and also declaring our opposition to any provision which would require a minority group to secure a certain minimum of signatures in so many (or all) counties in a given state (as, for instance, is the law in Illinois and New York). And while expressing our doubts as to the likelihood of any such Model Election Law being universally adopted (if, indeed, adopted anywhere), we nevertheless declared that "we do not take the fatalistic attitude that, because a trend is inevitable, therefore we should supinely submit. On the contrary, we assert that the greater the pressure on our rights and liberties, the greater must be the resistance. But experience has demonstrated that the only force in society today which possesses the will and the potential power to offer effective resistance to ruling class encroachments on constitutional liberties is the working class. And the potential power of the working class lies in its economic union, that is, in the Socialist Industrial Union. Thus, while we may agitate and protest, criticize and propose, so far as the curtailment of our rights and liberties is concerned, efforts will be largely in vain unless simultaneously steps are taken to organize the economic power of the workers."

## APPENDIX C.

### I.

#### S.L.P. Study Classes Conducted in 1939.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles, 1; Oakland, 1; San Francisco, 1.

CANADA: Hamilton, Ont., 2; Kamsook, 1; London, Ont., 1; Ottawa, Ont., 1; Vancouver, B.C., 1; York Co., 1.

COLORADO: Denver, 1.

CONNECTICUT: Bridgeport, 1; New Haven, 1; South Norwalk, 1.

WASHINGTON, D.C., 1.

ILLINOIS: Cook Co., 1; East St. Louis, 1; Fulton Co., 1; Rockford, 1; Waukegan, 1.

INDIANA: Evansville, 1; Fort Wayne, 1; Indianapolis, 1; Lake Co., 1; Whitley Co., 1.

MARYLAND: Baltimore, 1.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston, 1; Lynn, 1.

MICHIGAN: Wayne Co., 2.

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis, 1; St. Paul, 1; Winona, 1.

MISSOURI: St. Louis, 1.

NEW JERSEY: Cumberland Co., 1; Essex Co., 1; Hudson Co., 1; Passaic Co., 1.

GREATER NEW YORK, 3.

NEW YORK: Broome Co., 1; Erie Co., 1; Jamestown, 1; Monroe Co., 1; Oneida Co., 1; Onondaga Co., 1; Rensselaer Co., 1.

OHIO: Akron, 2; Cleveland, 1; Dayton, 1; Hamilton Co., 1; Lorain, 1; Salem, 1; Stark Co., 1; Steubenville, 1; Youngstown, 1.

OREGON: Astoria, 1; Bend, 1; Portland, 1.

PENNSYLVANIA: Allegheny Co., 1; Beaver Co., 1; Blair Co., 1; Dauphin Co., 1; Erie, 1; Greensburg, 2; Philadelphia, 2.

WASHINGTON: Longview, 1; Spokane, 1; Tacoma, 1; Vancouver, 1; White Salmon, 1.

WISCONSIN: Milwaukee, 1.  
Total, 76.

### II.

#### Report on Weekly People Clubs for Year 1939.

(Contributed to various funds  
in 1939.)

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles, \$35; Oakland, \$19; San Francisco, \$61.31.

ILLINOIS: Cook Co., \$120.60; Granite City, \$86.65; Waukegan, \$66.75.

INDIANA: Ft. Wayne, \$32; St. Joseph Co., \$9.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston, \$18.84.

MICHIGAN: Detroit, \$6.20; Highland Park, \$66; Wayne Co.: proceeds of July 15 picnic held by Federation Women's Clubs and the Weekly People Clubs, \$117.39.

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis and St. Paul, \$87.42; Winona, \$42.50.

MISSOURI: St. Louis, \$254.50.

NEW YORK: Erie Co., \$35; Jamestown, \$15.

OHIO: Cleveland, \$98.82; Hamilton Co., \$14.51; Mansfield, \$55; Steubenville, \$20.

OREGON: Bend, \$12.

PENNSYLVANIA: Allegheny Co., \$132.50; Philadelphia, \$67.76.

Total, \$1,473.75.\*

\*Add to this amounts received from disbanded Clubs: Bronx, \$8.35; Peoria, \$4; Milwaukee, \$7.20. Total from disbanded Clubs, \$19.55.

Grand total, \$1,493.30.



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